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TRADES' SOCIETIES

AND

STRIKES.

Report of the Committee on Trades' Societies,

APPOINTED BY THE

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION

FOR

THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE,

PRESENTED AT THE

FOURTH ANNUAL MEETING

OF THE ASSOCIATION,

AT GLASGOW, SEPTEMBER, 1860.

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CONTENTS.

PAGE

LIST OF TRADE SOCIETIES' COMMITTEE iv
PREFACE v
REPORT vii
ACCOUNT OF NORTHAMPTON BOOT AND SHOE MAKERS' STRIKE, BY JOHN BALL . 1
ACCOUNT OF WEST YORKSHIRE COAL STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF 1858, BY J. M. LUDLOW 11
ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF THE BUILDING TRADES IN LONDON IN 1859-60, BY THOMAS R. BENNETT AND G. SHAW LEFEVRE 52
ACCOUNT OF PRINTERS' STRIKES AND TRADES' UNIONS SINCE JANUARY, 1845, BY J. W. CROMPTON 77
ACCOUNT OF THE LONDON CONSOLIDATED SOCIETY OF BOOKBINDERS, BY T. J. DUNNING 93
ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF THE FLINT GLASS MAKERS IN 1858-9, BY GODFREY LUSHINGTON 104
REPORT ON TRADES' SOCIETIES' RULES, BY G. SHAW LEFEVRE 114
ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE OF CHAIN MAKERS IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES, BY GODFREY LUSHINGTON 147
ACCOUNT OF THE LOCK-OUT OF ENGINEERS IN 1851-52, BY THOMAS HUGHES . 169
ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT IN THE COTTON TRADE AT PRESTON IN 1853, BY JAMES LOWE 207
ABSTRACT OF MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS, BY GODFREY LUSHINGTON 265
ACCOUNT OF LEGISLATION RELATING TO COMBINATIONS, BY F. D. LONGE . . 339
ABSTRACT OF PARLIAMENTARY REPORT ON COMBINATIONS, 1824, BY PHILIP H. RATHBONE 351
ABSTRACT OF PARLIAMENTARY REPORT ON COMBINATIONS, 1825, BY FRANK H. HILL 373
ABSTRACT OF PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS ON COMBINATIONS, 1838, BY GODFREY LUSHINGTON 387
ACCOUNT OF WEAVERS' STRIKE AT PADIHAM, IN 1859, BY WILLIAM A. JEVONS. 433
ACCOUNT OF SPINNERS' STRIKE AT ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE, IN 1830, BY WILLIAM A. JEVONS 473
ACCOUNT OF SHIPWRIGHTS TRADES' SOCIETIES, IN LIVERPOOL, THE TYNE, AND OTHER PORTS, BY PHILIP H. RATHBONE 479
ACCOUNT OF TRADE COMBINATIONS IN SHEFFIELD, BY FRANK H. HILL . . . 521
ACCOUNT OF LEGISLATION AFFECTING LABOUR IN FRANCE, BY M. LOUIS BLANC. 588
DISCUSSION AT GLASGOW 595
APPENDIX 624
ANALYSIS OF THE CONTENTS OF THE VOLUME 631
INDEX 644

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PREFACE.

THE preparation of some parts of this volume, and the printing of the whole of it, have been very much hurried, in order that it might be ready for publication at the time of the Glasgow Meeting. To this cause must be attributed any textual errors which may be noticed. No serious inaccuracy, however, has, it is hoped, been committed; though, from the desire to include information received at a very late period, some of the materials placed at the disposal of the Committee have been very hastily arranged. To avoid delay, no attempt has been made to distribute the Special Reports, which form the larger part of the volume, in any order dependent on their subjects. Those who have been engaged in a similar work will be best able to appreciate the difficulties that surround it, and will be most willing to make allowance for inevitable defects in the editing and form of the volume.

It is due to the authors of most of the later papers to state that it has not been practicable to allow them opportunities of revising their Reports in proof.

The Committee feel bound to tender their special thanks to M. Louis Blanc, for his courteous and interesting reply to inquiries made on their behalf, with respect to usages or laws affecting the freedom of labour in France; and to F. D. Longe,

Esq., for permission to reprint, from his valuable pamphlet on the Law of Strikes, a sketch of the history of legislation on that subject in England. Their thanks are also due and are respectfully tendered to all those who have, in different degrees and ways, assisted them in their undertaking.

It is right to state, that but for the unremitting exertions of Miss Faithfull, the printer of this volume, its appearance at the present time would have been utterly impossible.

P. H. R.

REPORT.

THIS Committee was appointed by the Council of the Association at the suggestion of a meeting held at Liverpool in October, 1858. The object for which it was appointed will be found described in the papers in the Appendix, and in the preliminary Report of the Committee printed in the Transactions of the Association at Bradford, in 1859.

The Committee were prepared to encounter great difficulty in prosecuting their inquiries, and to meet with much opposition and not a little jealousy on the part of trades' societies. This expectation has in very few cases been fulfilled. After slight hesitation, by far the greater proportion of the societies applied to have come forward with promptness, and in some cases have taken considerable trouble to give the Committee full and accurate information. In a few instances, traces of the old leaven of suspicion and jealousy appeared; but these were exceptions. The cordial manner in which this inquiry has been met upon the part of trades' societies generally throughout the island demonstrates the great advance that has been made since the old days of secret societies.

Although the response on the part of the employers was not so general, yet a considerable number gave to the Committee valuable information, and some of the employers' associations forwarded important documents.

Besides this, a number of friends in different parts of the country, unconnected with either party, collected information in their respective neighbourhoods.

The Committee in this way received an amount of assistance and co-operation beyond what they were prepared to expect.

The mass of material at last became so great, that they found that the only method of reducing it to shape was to place certain portions of it in the hands of different members, to draw up special reports, for each of which the author alone was to be responsible; since it was manifestly impossible that any one could be answerable for the accuracy of a report who had not carefully gone through the complicated series of papers upon which that report was to be founded. The Committee, therefore, is collectively responsible only for the general views expressed in this Report.

A trade society, strictly speaking, is a combination of workmen to enable each to secure the conditions most favourable for labour.

The capitalist has the advantage of past accumulations in striking his bargain. The labourer, unassisted by combination, has not. It is the object of a trade society to give him this advantage, and thus to put him on more equal ground in competing with the capitalist.

Many trades' societies have institutions for other purposes attached to them, such as benefit societies, societies for insurance of tools, libraries, reading rooms, &c., but these, however desirable some of them may be, are still merely accessories.

Among the methods by which different trades' societies endeavour to compass their objects are the following:—

Publishing periodically the state of the trade in different parts of the country;

Keeping a book of names of unemployed men and of employers wanting men;

Assisting men from town to town in search of employment, and occasionally to emigrate;

Regulating the number of apprentices in the trade;

Maintaining men in resistance to their employers;

Regulating the number of working hours and the rules of the trade;

Organizing strikes.

One remarkable effect of trade societies—which is, strictly speaking, in conformity with economical laws—is, that by these means they render the rate of wages more equable over the same trade; but in as much as they tend in many cases to hinder the introduction of fresh workmen into particular trades they so far impede the transfer of labour from one employment to another. Skilled labour, however, cannot, when one trade is overstocked, immediately flow into another which is understocked; and it requires a certain lapse of time, sometimes even a generation, before the balance can be readjusted, during which time the ups and downs of the trade may have been most numerous. It requires, indeed, but a short time of extra profits in a trade to draw capital into it which cannot perhaps be withdrawn at the close of a temporary period of prosperity. A mill built, or a coal-pit sunk, is so much capital permanently locked up. A coal-owner informed the Committee, that for this reason a period of extra high prices for coal was a positive evil. A judicious rise of wages in time may prevent this evil. On the other hand, a starving man cannot stop to bargain too closely for means of existence. Wages being thus reduced, competition

among the masters may keep down profits to their average rate, and wages may remain lamentably low, until old hands dying off, and few new ones coming up, a scarcity of labour begins to be felt. How long it is before low wages produce their natural effect in this way, may be gathered from the history of the hand-loom weavers of Lancashire and of the stockingers of Notts. It is the not being able to hold for a market that places the artisan in an unfortunate position, and sometimes prevents him from obtaining the fair market price. In so far as trades' societies enable the artisan to do this, they do not violate the strictest laws of political economy. In instances which have come under the notice of the Committee, it has been asserted that masters have told the men that trade would bear higher wages if all masters would agree to give them, and have advised a combination for the purpose. According to the law of political economy, which supposes that when wages are low men will leave a trade, or at least, not bring up their children to it, this is a state of things which could not long endure; but there is a cause which in some trades interferes with this law, and which deserves attention. The necessity under which the very poor labour of making available every means of subsistence induces the father to procure employment for his children at the earliest possible age; and he may very likely have no opportunity of introducing them to any other trade than his own. On the other hand, in Lancashire it is found that a rise in wages sometimes actually reduces the supply of labour, by enabling and inducing a family to retain one of the girls at home to assist the mother.

There are two classes of trades, which stand upon very different bases. The building trades may be taken as an example of one class, and the cotton manufactures of the other. While it is quite conceivable that the cutlery trade of Sheffield, the cotton trade of Lancashire or Lanarkshire, or the woollen trade of Yorkshire, might entirely disappear from the country, this is not the case with the building trades; for it is impossible to carry them on except within a limited area. This makes a building strike of much greater present inconvenience, but of far less ultimate consequence, than a strike in a trade manufacturing exportable articles, and renders the action of trades' unions in the latter a question of more serious import than in the former; as in one case the competition is confined to the country, in the other it is between ourselves and the whole world.

The answers received by the Committee, and the prefaces to the rules of the different societies, for the most part agree in asserting as the primary reason of trades' societies, that without

combination the workman cannot in all cases secure the market price of his labour, but is, to a certain extent, at the mercy of his employer. This for two reasons:

1st. That in trades where one establishment employs a large number of workmen, the employer can discharge a single workman with comparatively slight inconvenience, while the workman loses his whole means of subsistence; so that to discuss wages upon equal terms with the employer, it is necessary for the artisans of each establishment to be unanimous in their action.

2nd. That without the machinery of combination, the workman being dependent upon his daily work for his daily bread, cannot hold for a market.

To these arguments it is replied by those who object to unions:

1st. That the law of supply and demand would, if profits trenched unduly upon wages, bring in fresh capital, and so provide for the raising of wages; or if profits were reduced by competition, then that labour would flow out until the wages rose to their proper level.

2nd. That every man ought to save, so as not to be living from hand to mouth.

The opinions of trades' secretaries are of course unanimous upon these points, but the Committee have found great difference of opinion to exist among employers; many believing, that without combination, workmen in their trades could not secure the fair market rate of wages. The evidence of one employer* upon this point is curious; it is to the effect, that when men work separately at their own houses they cannot secure a fair rate of wages without combination, but that when they work together in factories they can. The cases that exceptionally occur in which an unusually high rate of profit is accompanied by a lower than the ordinary rate of wages are open to correction by combination of the workmen, and by the aid extended from one trade society to another.

The Committee fear that the facility with which fair demands have been obtained, has, in some cases, emboldened newly formed trades' societies to demand more than was justly their due, or than they could receive without trenching unduly on the wages of their fellow-labourers in other trades. They are further of opinion, that in some of the more highly skilled and limited trades a strict system of combination has enabled workmen to demand wages out of proportion to the value of their labour, and that in those trades production has been seriously checked.

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* See Report on Chain Makers, p. 162.

Any man who has a commodity to sell, may sell it upon what conditions he chooses; but every inconvenient condition with which he fetters the sale reduces the value of the article. Some of the rules of trades' societies directly tend to reduce the value of labour, and therefore in the end the rate of wages; as when they contain stipulations that skilled labour shall be employed to perform operations which unskilled labour would be perfectly competent to discharge. In large trades it is quite hopeless to expect that it will be possible for the closest combination to raise wages for any considerable time to a rate beyond the value of the work done; and to waste skilled labour upon unskilled occupation is deliberately to reduce its value. There are certain conditions which affect health of body or mind, personal safety, or the method of payment, upon which the workman may fairly insist; and when trade societies limit themselves to these, the Committee conceive no valid objections can be taken. Such are opposition to the truck system,* the demand for the protection of machinery, &c. &c. When, however, they insist on certain methods of doing the work which are less economical than others, in the hope of creating more work, they simply reduce their own wages and not the master's profits. Not only so, when a trade society constantly interferes with processes of manufacture, the annoyance and element of uncertainty thus introduced renders a larger average rate of profit necessary to tempt capital into the trade, and therefore a less margin for wages is left. There is one method in which it appears to the Committee that trade societies have a full right to interfere, and that is to prevent false or defective workmanship. Every workman guilty of manufacturing, or of aiding in the manufacture of, any article which is not what it purports to be, either in quantity or quality, casts a suspicion upon all similar articles manufactured in the town, and thereby much depreciates their value. No rule can be too stringent to prevent this. It may be well to remark, that rules which have been supposed to be mere wanton interference with the working powers of the men, are sometimes justified as intended to secure honest work. Of this nature is one rule which has been animadverted on by the press, viz., the rule forbidding a bricklayer to lay down his trowel, and use two hands at once in laying bricks; which, upon inquiry, the Committee find is defended on the ground that laying bricks with two hands causes an insufficiency of mortar between the bricks. Nevertheless, workmen cannot too cautiously abstain from interfering with the methods

* The Committee regret to find that the Truck Act is in many cases evaded.

by which the employer conducts his business. It is at least as much upon the enterprise and farsightedness of the employers of Great Britain, as upon their capital, that the value of British labour depends. The daily and constant action of fettering prejudices on the part of workmen may in the long run cause greater loss of wealth to the country than all the strikes put together and doubled. The loss caused by these latter can be estimated, at any rate, to a certain extent; but the loss from improvements in processes of manufacture abandoned, or from projects allowed to remain castles in the air, because there "would be difficulties with the men about them," is utterly incalculable. No doubt many of these prejudices are most unfairly charged to the action of trades' societies; which are bound by their position not only to avoid encouraging them, but to exert every means in their power to destroy them.

An important function of a trade society as at present constituted, is by careful inquiry and discussion to arrive at some understanding as to what ought to be the market price of labour. This arrangement is often advantageous in proportion to the size of the area over which it extends. But in endeavouring to cause the adoption of a common standard of wages over a wide area, the degree of justice attained against want of fairness or capacity in single employers or in isolated localities, is to be balanced against the embarrassments necessarily encountered in the attempt to adjust the differences or local facilities for manufacture arising from varieties in the prices of fuel, carriage, motive power, house accommodation, or other means of livelihood, and in the raw material or processes employed as affecting the rate of production to each workman. Large combinations of workmen have therefore both to wield great power and also to employ that power in the settlement of questions requiring great knowledge of the details of trade, and even more patience and skill in the adjustment of conflicting claims.

On the part of the workmen the danger exists, that a standard intended to settle the minimum rate of wages should be adopted as a rate uniform both as respects time and skill. Under such circumstances, skill and trustworthiness operate rather to ensure regular employment. Large combinations comprising a wide area usually give rise to antagonist associations of masters. The settlement of the rate of wages thus becomes a contest between two great parties instead of a question between individual masters and their men. The influence of long established personal relations thus ceases to soften the asperities of such discussions.

The question of *strikes* is undoubtedly an important element

in inquiring into the action of trades' societies; but it has absorbed public attention as if it were the only one. A great many strikes originate in trades which have no then existing organization, but if a strike assumes any considerable proportions, a governing body is appointed at the time to carry it on. The Committee are disposed to believe that leaders of a strike, where there is no regularly organized society, are likely to prove more unreasonable and violent than where there is. A large proportion of strikes appear to have been precipitated by want of temper and courtesy upon one side, or on both; and the facts collected seem to show that the executive of a large society are more likely to take a cool and moderate view of a question in dispute than the men engaged in the heat of conflict. It is not to be denied, however, that sometimes there is a temptation to executive committees to keep up agitation beyond what is necessary, in order to increase their importance and to show their zeal; but experience gradually teaches, that the best executive committee is the one which succeeds in accommodating most disputes amicably, and whose zeal is shown in maintaining the efficiency and prosperity of those auxiliary institutions which have generally formed important parts of the organization of trades' societies. Strikes hold in the intercourse between employer and employed the same place that war holds with regard to the intercourse of nations. There may be occasions upon which a strike is just and necessary, but the necessity is always a sad one; and any man who aids in commencing a strike, without having by every means in his power attempted to avert it, is guilty of the crime of wantonly bringing misery upon his fellow workmen, and of injuring the prosperity of his country. In another respect strikes resemble war. The constant fear of a strike is as great an interruption to business and as great a check to enterprise in a trade, as the constant fear of war is to the business and enterprise of the world. Workmen are sometimes disposed to think that merely keeping up an agitation, without an intention of striking, may do good, and can do no harm; instead of which, all the uncertainty and disquiet they thus cause deteriorate the value, and therefore ultimately the price, of their labour. Trades' societies are beginning very generally to understand this truth, and although it may be feared that their practice is not, upon all occasions, up to their theory, yet the Committee venture to hope for an improvement in this respect, though the prevalence of strikes during the last two years is rather discouraging. The Committee have not found that the constant assertion that strikes are scarcely ever successful, is at all borne out by

facts. They are further disposed to believe, that in some cases the existence of a regularly organized trade society has prevented the frequent occurrence of strikes. With respect to methods of avoiding these struggles, they believe that when the question in dispute relates to conditions of labour, much may be done by arbitration. Co-operative establishments may also do much in ascertaining the relative market value of manual labour, of intellectual labour, and of capital.

The question of the advantage of a connexion between benefit societies and trades' societies is one upon which there is much room for difference of opinion. The principal advantage appears to be, that a single set of officers, &c., being able to carry on both societies by the same machinery, the management is more economical; the principal disadvantage, that there is a temptation in time of need to appropriate benefit funds to strike purposes, and that there is a very strong motive, amounting even to a kind of moral compulsion, held out to members of the friendly society to acquiesce, from interested motives, in the general policy of the trades' union, lest by resistance they should endanger their sick allowances and life insurance.

In the case of friendly societies the Legislature has provided a simple and efficacious remedy for individual members; but where the objects of a benefit society are combined with those of a trade society, the registration under the Friendly Societies Act being impossible, such a remedy is entirely wanting. It is quite impossible, in such cases, for individual members to prevent, however much they may disapprove, the expenditure on trade purposes of funds which they have subscribed for benefit purposes, and which should be laid by to meet the future exigencies of the society, without recurrence to the Court of Chancery,—a course which is obviously beyond their means.

It may also happen, that members may be driven into a course which they disapprove of through fear of losing the benefits in which through previous subscription they have attained a valuable interest. In this way the majority may have the power, under the present law, of forcing a minority to act in a direction which was perhaps never contemplated by the members on the formation of the society.

To the question of the effect which trade societies have upon the efficiency of workmen, no general answer can be given. It appears, in some cases, that trade societies have done something, though they might have done considerably more, to prevent inferior work; but there are other cases in which the influence of trade societies has apparently been prejudicial to

the efficiency and skill of the workman. It cannot be too often repeated, that to increase the value of any article is the safest way of raising its price.

The character and class of workmen who support the societies differ in different trades; there are some where most of the respectable workmen in the trade belong to the society; there are a few trades where the ablest and most highly skilled workmen stand aloof from the union.

The character, ability and wisdom of the leaders of trade societies also naturally vary much in different trades. So far as this Committee have been brought into personal connexion with societies' officers, their experience is, that the leaders are for the most part quite superior to the majority of their fellow-workmen in intelligence and moderation. Many of them have given most effective and intelligent aid in the prosecution of this inquiry.

The effect of trades' societies as an education in the art of self-government is important. Many of the societies have organizations of an elaborate character, and have a machinery for taking the votes of the trade at once simple and effectual; and in many trades no strike can be authorized until the question has been discussed by several committees. This gives a habit of deliberation before action which cannot but have a good effect.

Men who will think for themselves are, and probably always will be, the exception and not the rule; the great mass of mankind must have leaders. The Committee believe that it is better that these should be recognised and responsible men, who can be held accountable for the advice they give.

The leaders of trades' societies are known and responsible men; they have the confidence of their own class. Through them prejudices may be dispelled, and the laws of that political economy which, correctly understood, is the workman's best friend, gradually acquiesced in and obeyed.

There is one very serious question to which the Committee have directed attention, viz., the treatment of non-society men by society men. There appears to be a great improvement in this respect; nevertheless, the Committee fear that in too many instances the rights of non-society men are not respected, and that they are subjected to unjustifiable persecution. The murderous outrages which have disgraced the hardware trades of Sheffield, the needles put into the clay of brickmakers in Lancashire, the bellows cutting of the Midland counties, are, it is hoped and believed, exceptional cases; but although the societies of these trades deny any complicity in these crimes, the evi-

dence in some instances is too strong and direct to enable the Committee to acquit them of at least conniving at them. No doubt the great majority of trades' societies view these transactions with the same abhorrence that any right minded body must do; but the Committee think that respectable trades' societies ought distinctly to announce that they will hold no communication, and that they will disclaim all fellowship, with the society of any trade in which outrages occur. When outrages are frequent, it must be because the public opinion of the trade is bad, and as the trade society is the expression of the public opinion of a trade, it must be held responsible, whether direct complicity can be legally proved or not. Though these extreme measures have happily become exceptional, yet there are minor methods of annoyance, which it is feared are still too frequently practised. The Committee trust that the officers of trades' societies will most earnestly repress all such petty persecution; for they may rest assured that public opinion in a free country will never tolerate any infringement of the liberty of the subject. Even if it could be proved that the prosperity of any trade could be attained only at the expense of individual freedom, there would be no hesitation in the country as to which should be sacrificed. Public feeling will never countenance the officers of a voluntary association, however respectable, in exercising powers which have been constantly refused to the imperial authority.

It is only fair to observe that intolerance of difference of opinion, from which these evils spring, is a vice by no means confined to trade societies, but is one which in politics and religion has worked innumerable evils, and has only been kept in check by the cordial hatred with which men regard all tyranny except their own.

The conduct of employers' associations towards trades' societies has on too many occasions been most unfortunate. However wrongheaded in particular cases the leaders of unions may be, they are the duly elected representatives of their trade, and ought to be treated with consideration and courtesy. The fiction that they are self-elected is one which it would not be worth alluding to, if it had not been seriously repeated in the *Edinburgh Review*. So far as the Committee have been able to learn, the officers of trades' societies are genuinely the representatives of their constituencies. The strong language which is too often indulged in by both sides during the disputes of employers with employed, only betrays that there is felt to be something more than a commercial bond between them, and though mischievous and irritating, it may be forgotten after the

heat of the contest is past; but the Committee cannot but think it very unfortunate when masters' associations address their workmen through a lawyer, rather than through one of themselves, or when a trade society urges its claims upon the platform by the instrumentality of men who have no connexion with the trade. This remark of course does not refer to the choice of an impartial arbitrator.

The Committee conceive that there will be very little difference of opinion as to the advantage of the trade circulars issued by some of the societies, giving the state of trade in various parts of the country, and as to the reading rooms and libraries in connexion with other societies, where men can spend their unemployed hours.

The Committee wish to record their opinion distinctly, that improvement in the management of trades' societies has been most marked and satisfactory.

They cannot, however, consider that the relations between employer and employed are in a healthy state when strikes and lock-outs are so lamentably numerous as they have been during the last two years.

Employers and employed have no right to manage their affairs so badly as to cause inconvenience to third parties Every man who pays poor rates has a right to complain at their being increased in consequence of avoidable distress; not to mention the still more direct inconvenience caused by all considerable strikes to large bodies of men totally unconcerned, on either side, with the cause of dispute.

On the subject of apprenticeship, and the rules, written or customary, by which many trades' societies enforce the necessity, and restrict the privilege of it, as a condition of exercising their respective trades, the Committee forbear at present to express any opinion. They would be glad, if it were practicable, that this question, and others arising out of it, should on some future occasion receive special and systematic inquiry on the basis of a tolerably complete and exhaustive collection of facts.

The Committee have come to the following conclusions from the evidence before them:—

1. That trades' societies have of late years increased in number, and that an increased number of working men have become members of them.

2. That societies composed of workmen who are engaged in the same trade in different parts of the country have shown a disposition to unite, and that societies connected with different trades in the same town have also shown a disposition to unite.

3. That the principles upon which trade societies regulate their proceedings are more moderate, and that discussions between the workmen belonging to them and their masters have been managed in a fairer spirit than in the times before the repeal of the laws against combination.

4. That the workmen belonging to these societies form a better estimate now than heretofore of the condition of their respective trades, that they are less unreasonable in their expectations of obtaining increased wages, that they understand better the necessity of submitting to reductions, that they have generally overcome the prejudices which they once entertained against machinery, and that their leaders are men of higher character and intelligence.

5. That the strikes, though more frequent, are conducted with less violence than in former days, though there remains room for improvement in this respect, especially as regards trade disputes at Sheffield, and the attempts elsewhere made to intimidate, by publishing in the weekly balance-sheets injurious personal imputations or threats, as well as every other attempt to control the voluntary action of individuals or minorities.

6. That these changes are owing in great measure to the increased publicity which has been given to the rules of the Societies, and to the action of public opinion upon them since they have ceased to be illegal.

7. That the establishment of joint-stock companies, the capital of which has been chiefly subscribed by working men, and the management of which is controlled by them in different parts of England, will be of great use to working men, by contributing, both when they succeed and when they fail, to increase the operatives' experience of the relative value of manual and of intellectual labour and of capital, and by showing them that there are fluctuations in trade over which the masters have no control.

8. That there are still in many trades' societies rules—some acknowledged, some concealed—which interfere with the freedom of the masters, and of the men within as well as without the bodies that impose them, and which persons of all schools in political and social economy must utterly condemn.

9. That trades' societies have secured the co-operation of many prudent workmen, by undertaking to provide maintenance for those who are casually out of employment, or who are seeking for it by assuming the functions of benefit societies, occasionally by promoting emigration, or establishing reading rooms and libraries.

10. That whilst this union of purposes adds to the attraction of these societies, it not seldom enables a majority of their members to dominate over an unwilling minority in strikes and all their consequences.

11. That the legal difficulties which rich societies experience in finding a profitable investment for their funds often increase greatly the temptation to employ them in strikes.

12. That, leaving out of account the accidental benefits and the accidental mischiefs of trade societies, it must be admitted that they have at times assisted the workmen in a trade more speedily to realize higher wages when the profits and wages in it have been rising, and that they have in some instances been of advantage to the master by producing a greater uniformity of wages throughout a trade.

13. That, disastrous as have been the immediate results of most strikes to masters as well as to men, they have not been without their use to both, by inducing wiser and more gracious concessions on one side, and less unreasonable demands on the other.

14. That minor questions connected with trades, which often produce serious irritation, might be advantageously referred to a mixed tribunal of masters and men; but that, in the opinion of a majority of the Committee, it would be over-sanguine to hope for a removal of the more direct and serious causes of strife by such arrangement.

15. That the rate of wages must be settled between the masters and the men, and that the intervention of third parties, unless specially invited by both, and possessing in a very high degree the confidence of both, can be of little avail.

16. That the Legislature may do much good service to workmen, by providing an easy and cheap remedy, both in law and equity, to meet the case of disputes between trades' societies and the members, especially in respect to the application of benefit funds.

17. That the slightest return to the old policy of prohibiting combinations would be most mischievous, and that no legislative measures for preventing strikes and lock-outs would be effectual.

18. That combinations of masters and of men have always tended to become tyrannical when their rules, discussions, and modes of action have been kept secret; and that willingness to expose them to the public is the best pledge they can give that they are not engaged in plots which are dangerous to the public.

19. That the improved education of masters and of men,

there is good reason to hope, is doing more to avert collisions between them than any mere arrangements could accomplish, whether voluntary or enforced; that the experience of the past has convinced many of the employers that not to care for their hands, not to promote their intellectual and moral welfare, not to show sympathy with them and forbearance towards them, is to ruin themselves; and that the employed are learning that without temperance and self-government they must be slavish, that their interests are the same with those of the whole land, that the more they respect their own order, the less they will be at war with every other.

The Committee will ask leave to sit again another year, *pro formâ*, in order to include any important corrections that may be made in their reports in a supplementary report to the Association next year, if necessary. Although they have spared no trouble in verifying facts and statements in the most careful way, yet they cannot hope that the reports will be found absolutely free from error.

The Committee have now done their work, how imperfectly none can so painfully feel as themselves. They have, however, done their best. Though the fruits of two years of labour and thought, may appear to be but meagre; yet with so wide and so intricate a subject that could perhaps have hardly been avoided. The Committee venture to hope that the way may have been somewhat cleared for special inquiries of a more complete character than it was possible for the present one to have possessed. Could they feel that, in any degree, they had smoothed the way towards the avoidance in future of irritating disputes between employer and employed, then indeed they would feel amply repaid for their labour and anxiety. In conclusion, they can honestly say, that their sole idea has been to arrive at the truth, and if they have not succeeded, it has certainly not been from the absence of a most earnest wish to do so.

By order of a Sub-Committee, appointed by the General Committee, this Report was directed to be printed, as on the whole expressing the views of a majority of the General Committee.

(Signed) J. P. KAY SHUTTLEWORTH,
Chairman.

The following resolutions are appended as expressing the opinions of a minority of the Sub-Committee:—

1. That the simplest and universal function of trades' societies is the enabling the workman to maintain himself while casually out of employment, or travelling in search of it.

2. That the organization requisite for the exercise of this function enables and induces the labourer to attempt to compete with the capitalist for a share in the temporary advantage produced by the increase of demand, or the improvement of methods of production in different trades.

3. In pursuing this latter object, trades' societies often create by a strike the want of employment, which it is their first purpose to provide against.

4. That, nevertheless, the existence of a trade society, however strong, has no necessary connexion with the practice of striking in a trade.

5. That the temptation to strike is often stimulated by the accumulation of funds in the hands of a strong society, and the legal impediments to its safe and profitable investment.

6. That what we have called the universal function of trades' societies has the effect of securing to them the support of large numbers of the most prudent and moderate-minded workmen.

7. This support is further secured, in most cases, by the combination with the purposes of a trade society of those of an ordinary benefit society, and sometimes of other institutions, such as libraries, reading rooms, &c.

8. This combination of purposes often affords to a majority the means of involving an unwilling minority in strikes, and all the consequences which may flow from them.

9. The first or universal function of trades' societies might (we think) be safely legalized under the Friendly Societies Acts.

10. The second function might (we think) be practically superseded by habits of frank communication between masters and workmen on all matters affecting their common interest and mutual relations.

11. In cases in which masters and workmen are unable or unwilling to arrange matters of dispute, we think the ultimate resort to strikes or lock-outs might be avoided by the establishment of united associations of capitalists and workmen, to the arbitration of which united associations all disputed questions might be referred.

In accordance with resolutions, passed both by the Council of the Association and by the Committee on Trades' Societies, it is necessary to state that the author of each of the following Reports is alone answerable for the facts stated and opinions expressed therein; and that no responsibility in these respects attaches either to the Council or to the Committee.

ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE

OF THE

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BOOT & SHOE MAKERS

IN 1857-8-9.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES,

By JOHN BALL.

THE strike of which an account is given in the following pages arose from an attempt to resist the introduction of machinery into the manufacture of boots and shoes. In this craft three processes are involved, called in the trade "closing," "making," and "binding." The first of these consists in sewing together the pieces of leather forming the "legs," "uppers," or "tops" as they are technically called, the second in uniting the uppers to the soles, and the third in needlework, wherein women are chiefly employed. Women also find employment in closing; especially in the shoe-making branch of the trade.

Various attempts had been made to apply the principle of the sewing machine to working in leather, when in the course of the year 1857 a machine for "closing" the "uppers" of boots and shoes began to be introduced. No serious resistance seems to have been thought of by the members of the craft established in London, and in the large towns of the north, although some alarm was felt among them lest numbers of those engaged in the "closing and binding" departments should be thrown out of work. A different spirit was shown at Stafford, and at Northampton, and the neighbouring towns, Daventry, Kettering, Towcester and Wellingborough, well known as principal seats of the wholesale manufacture.

The materials at my disposal enable me to speak only of what passed in Northamptonshire.

In November, 1857, it became known that the new machine had been brought to Northampton. Alarm and excitement rapidly spread amongst the operatives. An open-air meeting was convened; it was attended by large numbers who believed, in the language of one of the speakers, that ruin was impending over all branches of the trade; that many would at once be thrown out of employment, and that the earnings of the remainder would be lowered by their com-

petition. A second meeting was called a few days later at the Milton Hall in Northampton, at which the resolution was taken which committed the operatives to the struggle now to be related.

At the first meeting a deputation was appointed to wait upon the principal employers in Northampton, in order to ascertain their feelings and intentions in regard to the introduction of the new machine. There is no authorized report of what passed at the interviews which thereupon took place, but it appears that several of the employers declared themselves indisposed to adopt the machine unless forced to do so by the competition of other houses in the trade, and that some of them used expressions which encouraged the men in their hope of successful resistance.

At the second meeting, held on the 11th of November, resolutions were passed declaring that no work should be "made up" for any employer giving out machine-prepared "tops," and calling on all those who were at the time employed for two shops in which the machine had been introduced to leave off working for those two establishments. Canvassers were appointed to visit the neighbouring towns and villages in order to enlist the general sympathy of the trade, and to obtain contributions for the maintenance of the strike. The greater number of the men engaged in working for the two shops in question joined in the strike, and the same thing occurred in a third shop from which machine-made work was soon after given out; but a certain number of old hands declined to join in the movement, and a further number of fresh hands were drawn in from the surrounding villages by the offer of increased wages from the shops on strike.

During the months of December, 1857, and January and February, 1858, meetings were held at all the chief places in the county, the feelings of the operatives were strongly, and almost universally, enlisted in the attempt to resist the introduction of machinery, but the money contributions obtained were not considerable. Many of the men on strike found no great difficulty in obtaining work elsewhere, and the remainder were supported out of the funds collected, so that little or no actual distress was felt at that period.

Up to the commencement of 1858, no general organization existed among the operatives engaged in the boot and shoe trade in Northamptonshire, neither was there any community of action amongst the employers. Most of the men belonged to benefit clubs, but trades' unions had not been generally established. The more intelligent of those who entered upon the conflict evinced by their speeches the doubts which they felt as to the possibility of ultimate success; and while dilating, as they constantly did, upon the evils which the introduction of machinery was certain to cause, and while exhorting their fellow-operatives to persevere in resisting it, they sometimes referred to the possibility of obtaining by union among the men a share of the profits which, as they assumed, the employers would be sure to reap from the saving made by machinery in the cost of production.

Whether with a view to some such object, or from the expectation that they could thus more effectually resist the further introduction

of machinery, the great object of the leaders of the movement among the operatives was to unite the whole body of those engaged in the trade in the towns and villages of Northamptonshire into a compactly organized body, subject to the guidance of a small number of men who should be chosen as the Executive Committee.

Accordingly, in April, 1858, the Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe Makers' Mutual Protection Society was established for the purpose, as stated in their rules, of preventing the introduction of machinery into the trade, and in order to protect, raise, and equalize wages, as far as possible. Every person engaged in the trade was to be eligible for membership; each district was to elect its own officers, make its own bye-laws, and manage its own funds; the executive, chosen annually by a meeting of delegates from each district, at Northampton, was to have power to act upon information respecting the introduction of machinery, or "any infringement of the rights of labour," by calling district or general meetings, putting any shop or shops upon strike, and subsequently conducting such strike as they should think proper.

The great majority of the Northamptonshire operatives hastened to enrol themselves as members of the Protection Society; but in spite of the increased power gained by the leaders of the strike, it was found that the shops which had introduced the machine, and against which their utmost efforts were directed, were not forced to close their doors, and that a number of hands, nearly sufficient for the wants of those establishments, still continued at work, a portion of the machine-made tops being sent to other towns at a distance to be made up.

Those who were induced to work at these shops did not, however, do so with impunity. From an early period of the strike they were visited with frequent proof of the feeling existing against them on the part of their fellow-operatives. Crowds, consisting chiefly of boys and young women, used to assemble daily at the hour when they left the obnoxious shops, and their appearance was greeted by groans and offensive epithets, of which the most frequently repeated was that of "scab." In not a few cases personal molestation, by throwing snow-balls and other missiles, was used towards young women and others working at the shops on strike.

The executive of the Protection Society did not accept the responsibility for these proceedings, which did not, so far as the evidence in my possession goes, amount to serious violence, but they published from time to time lists of the names of the men and women at work at these shops, headed by sentences in which the conduct and character of "scabs" was held up to general execration, and it does not appear that they made any attempt to check the system of intimidation which, in the months of April and May, 1858, led to many cases being brought before the local magistrates.

As the summer of 1858 advanced, increasing difficulty seems to have been felt in obtaining the weekly payments in aid of the strike from the members of the district branches in the smaller towns and

villages, and various symptoms of disunion were already apparent, when an incident occurred which seems to have had some indirect influence on the subsequent history of the strike.

The general rules of the Protection Society had provided that no member should take any person to instruct in any branch of the trade except he should receive a sufficient remuneration in the shape of a money premium; the amount of such premium to be settled by the different districts. The Kettering Branch of the Society had superadded to this rule a proviso that no one should be allowed to learn the art of shoe-making after he had reached the age of seventeen; and further, that no shoemaker should at any time have more than two apprentices. Shortly before this regulation was made, a young man named Japheth Plummer, who wished to change the calling of a stay-maker, to which he had been brought up, for that of shoe-making, had found a shoemaker at Kettering who was willing to teach him the trade upon terms mutually fixed between them. The person who engaged to teach Japheth Plummer being a member of the Society, refused to carry out his agreement after the new regulation was introduced among the Kettering operatives, and for some time the latter failed to find any man in the trade willing to instruct him. It was asserted on his behalf, and not denied, that a non-society man who was willing to teach him had been withheld from doing so by threats, and that an employer who was willing to give him work had been deterred by the resolution of his other workmen to strike rather than allow this breach of the rule which they were endeavouring to establish.

In this state of things, a brother of Japheth Plummer, also an operative in the stay-making trade, was induced to interfere by writing a succession of letters in the local newspapers, wherein the principles and practices of the Shoemakers' Society were unsparingly attacked. The controversy which ensued, carried on by letters bearing the signatures "John Plummer" and "Pell Junior," was conducted with much ability, especially on the side of Mr. Plummer, who has since become more widely known through various pamphlets connected with the working of trade societies.

The effect of the discussion respecting the case of Japheth Plummer seems to have been unfavourable to the Shoemakers' Union. Many of the operative class sympathized with a young man who seemed to them to have been hardly used. Again, the fact that although frequently molested and threatened, Japheth Plummer was able to obtain work, and that the Kettering Branch Society ultimately withdrew their opposition to allowing him to learn the trade, appeared to be a symptom of weakness, and probably contributed to shake the confidence of the operatives in the proceedings of their leaders.

Meanwhile, in the month of October, 1858, finding that, in spite of the publication of lists, the shops on strike continued to obtain hands, the Executive at Northampton resolved to make a further effort to coerce the recusants into submission. A notice was published de-

claring that as those who were working for the "machine shops" seemed determined to persevere in so doing, the delegates of the Mutual Protection Society had resolved that the entire body should engage themselves "not to work for any employer who may either now or at any future time give work to those, or any of those, who may continue to work for the shops on strike, after the 16th day of October, 1858." A further resolution was added, that the names of the obnoxious persons should be printed and sent to every employer in the town and county of Northampton, along with the preceding resolution.

Shortly after this, a shop in Kettering gave notice of a reduction in the price of making up some description of shoes. This notice immediately led to a strike of the men engaged at that shop, and to an application from the Kettering Branch to the Central Executive in Northampton for assistance towards supporting them. The application being unsuccessful, the members of the Society in Kettering and the neighbourhood felt dissatisfied, and seceded from the general body, and thereupon the organization throughout the country districts became materially weakened.

This state of things continued till the month of February, 1859, when, after previous discussion and concert between the leading houses in the trade at Northampton and Stafford, a notice was published stating that in consequence of sewing machines being extensively used in other towns, any further delay in introducing them on the part of the Northampton manufacturers would be permanently injurious to trade; and announcing further, the resolution taken to introduce machine-made tops in twenty of the principal shops in Northampton. Along with this was a notice signed by seventeen large employers in Stafford pledging them not to give employment to any fresh hands in the event of a strike occurring at Northampton in consequence of the last mentioned resolution.

These proceedings were regarded as a declaration of war by the Executive of the Mutual Protection Society. After an unsuccessful attempt to induce the employers to rescind their resolution, a large meeting of operatives decided on resorting to a general strike of all those employed in shops whereat the machine-made tops should be introduced. The men on strike were called upon to go on tramp: *i. e.* to look for work at a distance from Northampton, and the Executive were empowered to seek assistance from all trades' unions and trade societies in the United Kingdom, to support the wives and children of the men who should depart for this purpose.

It should be observed, that several of the Northampton firms that joined in the determination to introduce machine-made work, did not themselves use the machine, and some of them have not done so up to the present time. It was found that they could with equal advantage purchase the "tops" ready made from establishments where the machine had been already introduced, and have them "made up" at Northampton. The tendency of such a system, if it had become general, would have largely diminished the local field for employment

in the shoemaking trade, as the work to be done in such shops would be entirely confined to making up and binding.

From the best information that I have been able to procure, I conclude that the strike of February, 1859, was, from the outset, a comparative failure. Including the shops in which the machine had been previously introduced, the contest lay between a body of employers who represented nine-tenths of the trade of the town, and a body of operatives already discouraged by the experience of the preceding fifteen months, during which they had fruitlessly maintained a struggle of a more limited kind. A large portion, probably a majority of the whole body, left their work in the first instance, but of these a considerable proportion returned to their employers within two or three weeks. The whole number who quitted the town to seek work elsewhere may be estimated at 1,500, of whom many were young single men. They did not find as much sympathy among the men of their own and other trades in the districts where they appeared as they had been led to expect, especially when it was found that either from necessity, or because they had no strong feeling on the subject, men who had struck against machine shops, in their own town, consented to make up machine-prepared work elsewhere. The result was, that most of them returned before long to Northampton, where in many cases they found their places filled up by strangers who had come in from neighbouring places, and much distress necessarily ensued.

It is not possible to give any complete account of the sums collected in aid either of the original strike of November, 1857, or of the more extensive one of February, 1859. In the first instance the collection was confined to the members of the craft in the town and county of Northampton, and the proceeds were, in great part, absorbed in meeting the expenses entailed by the strike—printing, payment of pickets appointed to watch the shops on strike, canvassers sent to country districts, and the members of the executive who directed the proceedings. The payment for these services was fixed at the uniform rate of four shillings per day, but additional expenses were allowed while travelling.

The appeal to the trade societies of the United Kingdom in February and March, 1859, was not generally successful. The most intelligent of the members of those societies in the same trade disapproved of the policy of the movement, deeming it neither desirable nor practicable to resist the extension of mechanical improvements, although very sensible of the inconvenience and temporary suffering that are sometimes caused by a rapid change in the nature and extent of the employment afforded in any particular trade. In spite of this disapproval, several trade societies, in London and elsewhere, sent contributions of moderate amount, being unwilling to refuse this tangible proof of sympathy with their fellow-craftsmen.

The funds collected in the spring of 1859 were, in great part, expended in a payment of nine shillings each to the men who "went on tramp," thus leaving a very small sum available towards the

support of families of married men who left the town. This circumstance, along with others previously mentioned, probably contributed to the termination of the strike.

Attempts made in the spring of 1859 to revive the general organization of the Protection Society throughout the county met with but slight and partial success, and when it was apparent that the resources of the body were nearly exhausted, and its spirit worn out by failure, the strike was finally ended by the employers offering, and the men accepting, a slight advance on the price of making machine-prepared "tops."

For the foregoing narrative, and for an ample collection of materials, in the shape of newspaper reports, printed handbills, and other documents connected with the strike, I am largely indebted to Mr. John Plummer, without whose assistance it could not have been compiled. Without attempting to discuss any topic that admits of different judgments, I desire to indicate two questions arising out of the facts above detailed, which thoughtful men may well take into consideration.

Through experience and increased instruction, the education of the operative classes in most parts of the United Kingdom is so far advanced, that it seems reasonable to expect that attempts to resist mechanical improvements tending to save human labour will henceforward be more and more unfrequent. Though men may be averse to changes affecting their own trade, and though they may not admit that the ultimate advantage to the world counterbalances the immediate inconvenience of the change, they will gradually learn that in deciding to adopt any new machine which economises the cost of production, the manufacturer is urged by a compulsion still more imperative than that which forces his workmen to submit to its introduction. To them it is a rival, to him a master. They may sometimes succeed in finding employment elsewhere; the manufacturer must either suit his prices to those of his competitors in the same trade, or else see his business depart. If he lowers his prices without also diminishing the cost of production, he is clearly on the road to ruin. An association of operatives conducting a manufacture of any description for their own benefit, are forced, just as much as the individual employer in the same business, to adopt any improvement that economizes labour. They must feel, as practical men, that it is useless and unreasonable to ask employers not to conform to what is no less than the simple dictate of necessity.

It is, however, undeniable that improvements in machinery, when rapidly introduced into any branch of trade, sometimes deprive workmen and those depending on them of their daily bread. It commonly happens that a change which lowers the price of an article increases the demand for it, and the labour at first rendered useless is then absorbed in other branches of the same trade. The fact remains, that such changes do at times cause severe distress, though this is seldom prolonged beyond a short interval.

A question which seems to me to deserve more consideration

from intelligent operatives than it has yet received, regards the best means for diminishing the inevitable inconvenience and occasional suffering that arise from mechanical inventions which lessen the demand for labour. Such changes occur without the co-operation of the individual workman, and are usually no less independent of the will of the individual employer. Do they belong to the class of misfortunes that each household should endeavour to provide against by individual savings? Or could they be better met by the collective efforts of those engaged in the same trade, on the same principle on which provision is now made in benefit societies for death, accident, and sickness.

To the honour of the manufacturing operatives of this country it must be said, that they are very ready to contribute to the relief and assistance of those of their own class who claim their sympathy. Even in cases when they do not thoroughly approve of the objects of a strike, they are unwilling to refuse help. Yet, without attempting to argue how far some strikes have been defensible in principle, or advantageous in their results, there are few who will maintain that strikes against machinery can lessen the suffering of those who might otherwise have felt the change, or deny that they cause mischiefs of other descriptions which ought not lightly to be incurred. If it be possible to meet the shock of these periods of transition so as to ease the pressure upon individuals, without engaging in contests which are as hopeless as they are irritating, the whole community, but especially those who live by their labour, would gain by the cessation of strikes of this description.

The second question is suggested by a fact to which I have just alluded. It will not be denied that among the manufacturing operatives, as among other classes, there are men considerably in advance of the average of their fellow-workmen in intelligence and information. It is a fact eminently satisfactory that such men usually exercise great influence amongst those of their own calling. Like the rest of mankind, they are not always free from bias when their own feelings and interests are concerned, but in regard to matters involving the application of general principles to practical conclusions, their judgment is as sound and clear as that of men of equal natural ability in other walks of life. Through the influence of men of this description, when fortunately they intervene in sufficient time, many collisions between employers and their men are averted, and strikes prevented that are seen to be unjustifiable or hopeless. But when once a strike has commenced, it very rarely happens that the natural leaders of the class who are engaged in it come forward to express objections to the principles or the policy on which it was based, however opposed to it their real opinions may be. Through a natural sympathy with men of their own order, or from a reluctance to appear in opposition to their fellows, men acquiesce in proceedings of which they really disapprove, and contribute their share towards expenditure which they know to be hopelessly unproductive.

It is easy for such men to extenuate errors which their own intel-

ligence makes apparent to them by pointing to the prevalence of similar errors among other classes. They may urge with perfect truth that mistaken ideas of social economy, quite as indefensible in theory as those which have led to strikes against machinery, have at various times prevailed amongst the educated classes, and that it is unreasonable to feel surprise that errors, which a few years ago were nearly universal, should still prevail amongst the less educated part of the community; but such a state of things only makes it the more imperative on those who are more enlightened to oppose the errors prevailing amongst their own class. The several advances in social and legislative improvement that have made this country what it is, have been gained by the efforts of men who did not shrink from setting themselves against the prejudices and feelings of those who surrounded them; and if we are to hold our position amongst the foremost nations of the earth, it must be through the united efforts of all to combat whatever of error and ignorance still hold sway in our social system.

To contribute money towards a strike that is certain to fail, because founded on erroneous principles, merely helps to prolong a state of general suffering and ill-feeling. It is an act of weakness, certainly not of real kindness. There are quite enough of men among the operative classes who are competent to discern the occasions when strikes are indefensible. These men are equally well able to answer the question which I venture to address to them—whether it does not behove them to use whatever influence they possess for withholding the men of their own order from fruitless struggles against the fixed laws which regulate human society.

ACCOUNT

OF

THE WEST YORKSHIRE COAL-STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT

OF 1858.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES,

BY J. M. LUDLOW,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

[IN laying this report before the Committee, I beg leave to say, that it has been communicated, in MS., to Mr. John Holmes on behalf of the men, to Mr. W. E. Forster, as one of those who attempted to mediate between masters and men, and to Messrs. Briggs, coal-owners; and in proof, to Messrs. Briggs again (who went through it with me in a conference of several hours' duration), and to Mr. Shaw, Miners' Delegate for West Yorkshire, and that every fact, figure, and explanation has been inserted which any of the persons consulted deemed important.—J. M. L.]

The West Yorkshire coal-strike of 1858 is remarkable in several respects,—as offering an instance of a class which, with the multiplication of trade-societies, is becoming ever rarer and rarer, viz. that of a strike itself originating a trade society,—as having been preceded for many years by the formation of an employers' association, and occasioned by its proceedings,—as exhibiting in a marked degree the natural tendency of trade societies, when either defeated or strenuously resisted, to enlarge the sphere of their operations;—finally, as ending in what is admitted to be, even by those least disposed to exaggerate the result, a partial triumph for the men, who submitted to only half the reduction of wages which their employers sought to impose upon them, and retained their Association, which their employers sought to crush, and who have indeed, since then, Mr. Holmes states in his paper in the last volume of the Society's Transactions, which I am about to refer to, regained the whole of the reduction.

Two histories of the strike are already before the public; one, that by Mr. John Holmes, in the "Transactions" for 1859, p. 640; the other by Mr. Tremenheere, in his report for 1859 as Commissioner under the 5 & 6 Vic. c. 99, p. 39. Either of these, it might have been thought, would have rendered the present paper superfluous. But

Mr. Holmes, from his position in connexion with the men's association, has not had access to documents on the masters' side, of which I have had the advantage; Mr. Tremenheere, on the other hand, obtaining information on some points apparently from the masters alone, has been, as he himself admits in a letter which I have received from him, misled as to one of his leading statements.

The story had therefore still to be told; and I should add, that I have not found it possible, without impairing its value, to sever it from that of both the Associations above referred to; nor can it be well understood by those not connected with the colliery districts, without a few preliminary observations as to the nature of the employment on which those associations are formed to operate.

I. *Coal-mining in West Yorkshire and its Characteristics, as respects Employers and Employed.*

"The occupation of a collier," it is stated by an employer who has shown much disposition to further the objects of the Committee, and whose "Remarks on the Cause, Operation, and Effects of the Colliers' Strike in West Yorkshire in 1858" (MS. supplied to the Committee) I shall endeavour to embody, as far as possible, entirely in this paper, supplementing them from other sources, "cannot strictly be considered a skilled one, no apprenticeship being needed." "Part of the men," he states again in his evidence before our Liverpool Sub-Committee, "are paid by the piece, and part by daywork. The 'top hands,' that is, those who work on the surface, are paid by the day, and the 'bottom hands,' that is, those who work underground, are chiefly (to the extent of about seven-eighths of the whole) paid by the piece. . . . We have what are called 'bywork men,' who are paid by the day. . . they are employed in removing rubbish, laying roads, removing props, and any other underground work except cutting coal. These bywork men generally work by night. The men find their own candles, which cost about 6*d.* a week" (Mr. Holmes states that these have to be bought of the steward, and paid for 2*d.* per pound above the market price);* "when they use safety lamps we find the oil. I should mention that we find them their coal for domestic use; but they have to find carriage for it to their houses themselves. This allowance is equivalent to the finding of their own candles." The "top hands," the Employer tells us, "are not colliers, but mere labourers, except the banksman, who must be an honest man, and we pay him higher wages accordingly." "The colliers employ boys under them... called 'hurriers,' to push the scoops; these boys when taken from the poor-house, as they

* The Truck Act (1 & 2 W. IV. c. 37), it may be observed, specifically excepts from its prohibitions (s. 23) stoppages or deductions from wages on account of rent of tenements occupied, medicine or medical attendance, materials, tools or implements supplied to the workmen (the exception as to materials, tools or implements being confined to miners), hay, corn, or provender for beasts of burthen employed by the workman in his trade, or victuals dressed and prepared under the roof of the employer.

The policy of some at least of these exceptions is open to great doubt, and it is easy to see how they may be perverted into direct violations of the spirit of the Act. The power of stopping rent out of wages, in particular, gives to the employer in many cases a tremendous hold upon the employed.

often are, are apprenticed to the men who employ them;" in some collieries, to the masters. There is otherwise no system of apprenticeship. "Hurrying," it should be thus understood, is, as a rule, paid for by the men, and constitutes, in addition to "candles," as will be seen from the men's "Plain Statement," and with 1*d.* for "wage-paying," which I trust is not a general charge, a deduction from their gross earnings. Indeed, the statements of masters and men are, on the subject of these deductions, not altogether reconcilable. Thus, I have been informed by a miner who has worked for the very employer I quote from, that candles used to cost him 8*d.* a week, and not 6*d.*, and that he has known powder and fuse cost as much as 6*s.* a week, which, however, the Employer suggests would probably be when sinking a shaft; whilst another miner, referring however rather to the South Yorkshire coal-field, to which indeed the strike (as will be seen hereafter) actually extended, has declared that candles, powder, fuse, sharpening shafts, cost certainly not less than from 6*d.* to 9*d. a day.** It is certain indeed that these deductions vary from district to district, more or less from mine to mine; and we may fairly presume, on the one hand that the Employer, our informant, from his very frankness in coming forward, must be one of the more liberal of his class,—on the other, that every employer has a natural tendency to state earnings at their maximum, and deductions at their minimum, as every workman has to reduce the figure of earnings and maximize that of deductions.

On one point, however, I feel satisfied that the Employer's statement is open to a serious correction. The occupation of a collier is not "strictly" a "skilled one," in this sense only, that the physical labour required for it may be performed by any man with sufficient thews and sinews to carry it on. But among the colliers themselves, I am informed, so great is the value of a peculiar training and aptitude, that there are distinct classes of "thick-bed men" and "thin-bed men," of whom the "thick-bed men" cannot gain a living at the work of the "thin-bed men," while surpassing the latter in their own field of employment. And beyond the physical labour, there is required

* I have had a number of pay-tickets placed in my hands, entirely confirming these statements, and showing that the Employer's estimate, if correct for his own portion of West Yorkshire, would not in any way represent the state of the case in other coal districts. Take for instance the following copy of a South Yorkshire pay-ticket:

"_____Colliery.

"_____Dale.

"June 17th, 1858.

"(Name of Workman)

	£	s.	d.	Dozens.	Corves.	Yards.	Rate.	£	s.	d.
Club	0	0	4							
Coals										
Rent	0	5	6							
Sharpening	0	0	8							
Shafts	0	0	4							
Powder	0	6	0							
Candles	0	2	4		Tons Slack					
Tools					Total			3	9	11
Fuse	0	0	10		Deduct			0	16	0
	0	16	0		Balance			2	13	11

"Settlement in full of all demands."

a familiarity with the peculiar dangers of the occupation, and a caution in guarding against them, which nothing but long experience can supply. The testimony of the men on this is so unanimous, their reasoning so perspicuously satisfactory, that it has been impossible for me to withhold my assent from it. The skilful miner, they say, prepares the work for the unskilled one; to use their own terms, after the skilful miner has "driven the straightwork," the unskilled one may do the "widework." But if put to the former labour, knowing nothing of the danger of naked lights and accumulations of gas, the latter class are the cause of numerous accidents; and I am informed, moreover, that the labour of the mine, when undertaken in after life, is found so unpleasant, that "top hands" sent down during a strike, generally leave the pit as soon as possible, though their average wages above ground are but 18*s.* a week; and so wearing, that those who remain of the men thus introduced do not live half the time of the ordinary miner, short as we shall see presently that this is. For indeed, it is admitted by the employer whom I have quoted, and largely insisted on by the men, and almost any newspaper we take up may convince us, that the collier "is subject, in his calling, to extra risk of life and limb." So great is this risk, that, according to a Parliamentary paper referred to by Mr. Richard Bayldon, of Methley, in one of his pamphlets, the loss of life among the coal-miners of England, numbering 230,000, by accident connected with their employment, was 7,081 in the seven years from 1851 to 1857, both inclusive, making over 1,000 a year, or 1 to every 230 men employed; whilst the number of injuries inflicted short of death, of which no record is kept, must be something enormous. Indeed, Mr. Holmes quotes the Registrar-General to the effect that "more than one-third of the miners meet with violent deaths;" but this would seem irreconcilable with the previous figures. The proportion of sickness, it further appears from the authorities quoted by Mr. Holmes, from 20 to 60, is more than 67 per cent. above the average, and the value of the miner's life is 27·7 years, as against 42·3 for the agricultural labourer.

Accordingly, it is further admitted by the Employer above referred to, as well as by independent authorities,* and is equally insisted on by the men, that the working collier, in consideration of such extra risks, is "entitled to a higher remuneration" than "the superior labourer in farming operations," which remuneration, in the Employer's view, "may fairly be covered by fifty per cent." upon the rate of wages received by the latter. It does not of course follow that the men would accept this basis of calculation.

Let us now look at coal-mining as respects the employer. "Perhaps there are no occupations" (says the Employer before quoted) "that employ more capital than collieries, in proportion to the capabilities of production, as it seldom happens that a master can turn

* See the Rev. Mr. Bowditch's Lecture on "The West Yorkshire Coal-Strikes," which is anything but favourable to the men.

over his capital employed more than once in twelve months, so great, generally, is the outlay before any return can be obtained; and when in full operation, the weekly wages (payable all in cash) amount to at least 50 per cent. of the cost of production. The risks also, in colliery operations, are particularly great; indeed, on this head it has become a trite saying, that commencing a colliery will turn out either a 'poor-house or a coach.' It is a notorious fact, that a very great many collieries have ruined the original projectors, by absorbing much more capital than was anticipated; and that other parties have afterwards purchased the plant and goodwill for one-fourth or one-third of their cost, and then the undertaking has adequately remunerated the purchaser, by its being burdened with a proportional less annual charge for interest and restoration of capital, equal in fact to a fair profit. Indeed, it is a matter of doubt whether the working of coal throughout the whole of the colliery districts has paid more than five per cent. upon the original outlay." And "it so happens, that in colliery operations little or no saving can be effected, except in the wages, as almost all the other expenses are fixed and stationary, and any attempt at saving in ropes, wood, iron, and other articles of consumption, would be false economy."

It would obviously be important to obtain a closer estimate of the conditions under which the coal-mining business is carried on. Some data to this effect are supplied to us by the "Employer." "Our hewers' wages," he states, "are 2*s.* 10*d.* per dozen corves, weighing 55·4 cwt., equal to about 12·3*d.* per ton, without hurrying or tramming; and our total wages—colliers, and other hands—are averaging 2*s.* 3½*d.* per ton, besides a charge for clerks, agency, and management. Our rent, or payment for royalty, is about 6½*d.* per ton; and other expenses, such as cost of timber for props and other purposes, iron, ropes, oil, bricks, lime, rates, taxes, interest and restoration of capital, and other disbursements, amount to about 1*s.* 5*d.* per ton, making a total cost of about 4*s.* 3*d.* per ton. . . . These figures can be proved from our books. . . . We pay the same wages for the total tons drawn, and not so much for best coal, so much for seconds, and so much for slack. We are now selling slack (or small coal) at 1*s.* 9*d.* per ton; and yet it costs us, in wages alone, 2*s.* 8¾*d.* per ton! so that of course we have to make up that loss in the superior price of the two other sorts."*

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* In confirmation of the above figures, I am obligingly supplied by the same gentleman with the following statement of wages paid at his colliery, for the quarter ending March 31st, 1860, taken from his books:

"Hewing wages ... ... = 13·1*d.* per ton.
Hurrying and straightwork ... ... = 6·6 „ „
Bywork ... ... = 8·7 „ „
Top or surface wages ... ... = 5·6 „ „

Total average of wages paid from January 1st, 1860, to March 31st, 1860 ... ... = 29*d.*, or 2*s.* 5*d.* per ton."
Being, in fact, 1½*d.* per ton more than above stated.

These figures, it will be observed, supposing them to be average as to cost, would give the following net profit:

	Per cent.
at 4*s.* 7*d.* per ton, selling price before 1853	7·27
at 6*s.* 8*d.* „ „ highest price before 1853 (which lasted only a few months)	36·25
at 4*s.* 9*d.* „ „ price at time of attempted reduction	10·53

—the above prices being those quoted by the Employer, and which, it will be seen hereafter, differ from those of the men. The mean of the three percentages, supposing the periods equal, would thus give £18 per cent. of net profit.

It is right to point out that the above data are quite irreconcilable with the statements of the men, who indeed have far less means of judging as to most of them. The "General Secretary" to the Miners' Association reckons the cost in the West Yorkshire district at less than 3*s.* per ton; whilst about 2*s.* 9*d.* is the figure named to me by an intelligent miner, who has worked for our Employer himself. 1*s.* 1*d.* per ton is denied to be an average of hewers' wages; and it is declared that the price paid for getting "slack" is almost, if not quite, universally very far below that of the other sorts. In endeavouring to probe these discrepancies to the bottom, I have ascertained that their main source lies in the different statements of masters and men as to weights. Thus, whilst the Employer states that he reckons the ton of coals at twenty-one cwt. both for sale and for wages, his men assert that he reckons it for wages at twenty-five cwt., filling five corves to the ton, and each corf containing five cwt., so that the dozen corves would make sixty cwt., and not fifty-five as he represents (fifty was the figure stated at first). This is a point which nothing but the weighing clauses of the new Mines Inspection Bill (since mutilated by the House of Lords) could have cleared up. Indeed, the men declare universally that the corves have grown, to use the words of one of them, "as an oak-tree out of a sapling;" whilst the Employer distinctly asserts that his corves have not changed for the last twenty years. As respects slack, the discrepancy seems to be solved in this manner: a certain portion of slack always finds its way up with the coal, when it is screened out, and for this no doubt the miner is paid as for best; but there is a large amount of slack which he has to riddle out at the bottom of the pit, and for which, when it is brought up, he is paid at a most trifling rate. But this, the Employer tells me, does not apply to his own and many other pits, where the coal is sent up unriddled; and wages are higher when it is otherwise.

In the South Yorkshire district a higher profit is, I believe, confessedly obtained. A handbill circulated by the men during the strike in reference to the Barnsley District, and quoting a paper read by Mr. Rich before "the Statistical Society,"—apparently a local one—reckons the wages at half of the cost of production, and the cost of production at half of the price, giving a profit of fifty per cent. A more detailed statement, which has been supplied to me by the men, gives the following as the cost of coal getting in a particular colliery

of the Barnsley bed (which is nine feet thick) at the date of May 2, 1860.

	s.	*d.*	
Hewing	1	0	per ton.
Straightwork	0	1	„ „
Daywork	0	3	„ „
Wear and tear, and restitution fund	0	3	„ „
Royalty	0	7	„ „
Total cost	2	2	„ „

A similar table for the Silkstone bed gives 3*s.* 2*d.* total cost.

I do not, of course, in the least vouch for these figures, either as correct or complete, though fully persuaded that they are meant to be both. They are, like those for West Yorkshire, entirely repudiated by the masters. Some of the data, it is obvious, are not within the cognizance of the men, and can only be supplied by them at second hand; they are such as they no doubt will be found most apt to understate; but they are equally those which the employer has the greatest temptation, even without intending it, to overstate. As respects however all data actually within their own cognizance, I believe a truer average estimate will be supplied by the men than by the masters; and I say this, without in the least wishing to cast a slur on the veracity of the latter. The master practically knows little more than the working of his own pit or pits, to which he is mostly tied for life; the men, on the contrary, shifting from pit to pit, sometimes even from district to district, have a much wider field of experience. Whilst, I repeat it, in the coal trade, as in every other, the best masters will almost invariably be those who come forward to give evidence, as having least to conceal; so that a master's statement, however scrupulously correct as against himself, always necessarily represents the truth under its most favourable, never under its average aspect as towards the working men.

Something at any rate, it must be recollected, is required to explain the latter half of the popular saying quoted by the Employer, that "a colliery will turn out either a poor-house or *a coach.*"* The conclusion to be come to, indeed, is, I suspect, precisely that which the saying indicates, namely, that, with a brisk demand, a good colliery at full work is a most remunerative business.

It will thus be seen that the conflicting interests of capital and labour can hardly be brought out in sharper contrast than in the instance under view. The coal-owner carries on a speculative, hazardous trade, ever fluctuating, because the large profits made in it,

* The "poor-house" half is indeed entirely denied as to the West Yorkshire district by one who knows it well. Throughout West Yorkshire the coal-owners are reported to be all of them wealthy men, who have made their own fortunes. The prices said to have been paid for collieries are however often greatly exaggerated. Thus, an employer has told me he paid £26,000 for a colliery, for which he is reported to have paid £90,000 during the present year.

when it is profitable, always tend to overstock it, and in which, when overstocked, the sole margin left by competition, not for profit alone, but for prudence, must be taken out of the remuneration of labour. The coal-miner works at a perilous employment, in which every accident, such as those which we have seen saddening our news-sheets of late years with increasing frequency, seems to call upon him to take every opportunity of increasing his remuneration, or diminishing his risk; if he be reckless, whispering "a short life and a merry;" if he be prudent, reminding him of the needs of wife and family, should death or incapacity overtake him. We have now to see how these conflicting interests festered, till at last they broke out into open hostility.

II. *The West Yorkshire Coal-trade till the Strike of* 1858—*The Masters' Associations—The* 4*s. Limitation of Earnings.*

"The coal-trade," Mr. Holmes says, "seems to be particularly subject to contentions between masters and men." A "severe and almost general strike" for an advance of wages had however, he tells us, "ended in 1844 against the men;" and from 1844-5 to 1853, it is stated by him and by the men,* and not, so far as I am aware, denied by the employers, "the coal-trade was nearly uniform in both price of coal and scale of wages." The colliers' wages in West Yorkshire, we are told by the Employer before referred to (whom I shall henceforth designate emphatically by that name), "by the piece or contract were such, that with nine hours' employment, a medium workman could earn 4*s.*" Mr. Holmes, it will be found, is at variance with him on this point, declaring that as far as he can learn, wages did not average more than 3*s.* 6*d.* for ten hours' work. In January, 1853, coal began to rise in price,—the men say, "from, at the pit's mouth, wholesale, 5*s.* per ton, up to 8*s.* 9*d.* in January, 1854,"— the Employer says, speaking "from personal experience in reference to the Whitwood Colliery, near Normanton," from "an average of 4*s.* 7*d.* per ton to an average of 6*s.* 8*d.* at the pit." The discrepancy between the two sets of figures is, it is said, in part explained by those of the men referring to "best" coals, those of the Employer to the "average" of all. But even thus, the Employer's figures would vary from those published by a "West Yorkshire Coal-Owner," to prove the falsity of the men's statements, and which would give as the average before the rise, in January, 1850, 4*s.* 3¾*d.*—as the average of January, 1853, immediately after, 4*s.* 8¾*d.*—as the average on January 9, 1854, when coal was highest, 6*s.* 1¾*d.*; this table, though impugned in several respects by the men, agreeing with theirs in fixing 8*s.* 9*d.* as the price of best coal in January, 1854.† It is now indeed alleged by the employers, that of the two

* A Plain Statement of the Origin, Cause and Results of the Colliers' Strikes and Lock-out in the Leeds and Wakefield Districts, made at a public meeting at the Court-house, Leeds, on Thursday, November 11th, 1858. (Leeds: David Green.)

† See "Plain Statement," p. 13. The average of 6*s.* 1¾*d.* for January, 1854, derived from the West Yorkshire Coal-Owner's table, should, however, be raised to 6*s.* 3¼*d.*—the absence of any quotation for "seconds" arising from this, that owing to the demand, "seconds," as I am informed, were sold for "firsts."

tables given in the "Plain Statement," that related by the men applies to Leeds prices, that of the "West Yorkshire Coal-Owner" to Wakefield ones. But not only is this distinctly denied by the compiler of the men's table, who affirms that the prices are those at the pit's mouth, carefully taken from the invoice of the largest Leeds dealer, and which, as it happens, run about half-way between those of Leeds and Wakefield, but this statement is confirmed by a letter addressed to him by the dealer in question, which I give in a note.* The average price in 1850 would then be, according to his figures, 3*s.* 6*d.* instead of 4*s.* 7*d.* Thus, according to the Employer, the rise in the average price of coals, from 1850 to 1854, would be at least 45 per cent.; according to the coal-dealer, more than 90 per cent. Whom are we to believe? Both, I take it, on the supposition that in fact different prices were paid at different collieries, and by different dealers.† But the true average must lie between the two. If we take the mean, or 62½ per cent., I do not think we shall be doing injustice to the employers. It is no doubt true, indeed, that the high prices could not be kept up for more than a few months.

"In consequence of the great advance in the price of coal in 1853," says the Employer, "the masters made three advances in their operatives' wages, amounting altogether to 30 per cent. upon the former rate, thus enabling the collier to earn 5*s.* 4*d.* with the same labour and in the same time as before." These advances, although given voluntarily by some masters (the "Employer" among the number), were not so in all cases. "I believe," he says in his evidence before the Liverpool local Committee, "several masters did not make this advance voluntarily, but were forced to do it." With respect to some, he believes "there was a turn-out, or threat of turn-out, to obtain the advance."

It follows from these statements of the Employer, that while prices rose, according to himself, 45 per cent., or according to what I venture to consider a truer estimate, 62½ per cent., wages rose 30 per cent. only; the masters in any case, so far as appears, retaining the whole

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* "ALLERTON MAIN COAL WHARF, LEEDS,
"*May* 15*th*, 1860.

"DEAR SIR,

"On your referring me to the first column of the price list of the 'Plain Statement,' I beg to assure you that these were the prices I paid for coals at the pits during 1848, 1849, and 1850.

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) R. M. CARTER.

"John Holmes, Esq."

The figures in question are as follows:—

	PER TON.				PER TON.	
	s.	*d.*			*s.*	*d.*
Best Lofthouse (1850) . . .	5	0	—	Seconds	3	6
Allerton Main „ . . .	4	6	—	Slack	1	0

† I would indeed point out that whilst the Employer's "average" is based not only upon price, but upon the relative production of the different sorts of coal, the others are based on price alone. The result however is, I believe, substantially the same.

increase of profit on so much of the cost of production as does not consist of wages.

The masters had moreover a machinery at command, towards retaining to themselves, as against the public, the benefit of the advance of price, which is somewhat charily dealt with by them in their appeals to the public, viz. an association amongst themselves, as the "Employer" states, "for the regulation of prices, weights, and other matters connected with the trade," or, as he says in his evidence, "to take cognizance of prices, weights, and legislative enactments affecting collieries, and rules and regulations as to the working of coal-mines." The formation of this association is assigned by Mr. Holmes to the year 1853; Mr. Briggs, however, in the course of the discussion at Bradford, stated that, "it has existed for the last thirty years." I am sorry to say that the principle of secrecy so often cast into the teeth of the men's trade societies, appears eminently characteristic of this trade society of coal-owners. Although so long in existence, it is alleged to be "hardly in a state of formation;" to have "no rules nor regular subscriptions;" and I have vainly solicited copies of its minutes, even as respecting its most important proceedings. In addition, moreover, to this "General Association," as it is termed by the "Employer" (but which indeed seems now almost broken up), it would seem that the masters of particular districts (Barnsley, Wakefield and Leeds, and Gildersome) are in the habit of meeting for similar purposes to those of the general body, but act quite independently, and do not always show the same abstinence from publicity, as will be seen farther on.

Nor should we forget, in estimating the powers of collective action amongst the masters, the existence of the "Mining Association of Great Britain," a meeting of which Mr. Tremenheere in his report states himself to have attended. Although instituted for purposes of a scientific and social character, it is impossible to overlook the opportunities which it must afford the coal-owners, by simply bringing them together from all parts of the kingdom, for preparing and concerting their measures towards the men. I do not of course mean to imply that the subject of wages ever formed part of the deliberations of the body; but the belief has certainly been expressed to me by the men, that the 15 per cent. reduction of wages which led to the strike of 1858 was in fact resolved upon by their masters on the occasion of the meeting of the "Mining Association" for 1855.

Masters and men, however, employed very differently their respective shares of the enhanced price. "The higher prices of coal," to quote always from the "Employer," "not only stimulated the masters to extend their works, where practicable, but induced many other parties to commence new collieries, in the hope of securing the then highly remunerative sales." The masters were thus engaged, on the one hand in increasing the supply by extension of their works, on the other in keeping up prices by means of their union. The men, on the contrary, without being as yet banded in any formal association, took a directly opposite course. The advance of wages "had the effect of

inducing the men to work shorter hours, and so to earn very little, if any more; consequently requiring a greater number of hands to produce the same quantity of coal."

"The number of operatives required was thus greatly increased; and not only youths of seventeen to twenty years of age became colliers on their own account (who had previously been only hurriers, or trammers and assistants), but also many common labourers were converted into colliers, *particularly in the thick seams*, and hence the production not only overtook the consumption, but the capabilities of production greatly exceeded it." I may here observe, that I find no statement anywhere that the new hands thus called in by the mere extension of the demand for labour were in anywise molested by the colliers, or indeed that any jealousy was shown towards the new-comers so long as there was full employment for all. It is only from the period of the strike consequent on the fall in prices that misbehaviour towards the new hands on the part of the old ones is mentioned.

This limitation of earnings by the men, which indeed was only generally practised from the time of the strike, and was then (1858) embodied in one of the early rules of the Miners' Association, is evidently a sore subject with the masters. "There are," says the Employer in his evidence, "some objectionable rules in the Colliers' Union, one of which is, that when a man has earned 4*s*. a day he shall come out of the pit. I have known men come out of the pit at eleven o'clock in the morning, having gone in at six." And he states, in answer to some queries put to him, that the lock-out resolutions after referred to were especially directed against the restrictive principle adopted by the men.

Now if the collier's work is as nearly an unskilled one as is represented by the masters; if men "can learn the work of a collier in a few weeks," as stated by Mr. Tremenheere in his report,—a statement corroborated by the Employer in his evidence, where he says of the "top men" and "common labourers" whom his firm actually sent into the pit during the strike of 1858, "in a very few weeks these unskilled men would have become skilled,"—it is difficult to see what great inconvenience was caused to the masters, at this period at least, by the limitation of earnings. No doubt what the Employer says is true: "We had much rather employ the regular collier, if he could behave properly, than put any other man in his place;" since, whilst acquiring the requisite skill, the unskilled man must, and, the Employer admits, does, cost more to the master than the skilled one. The very process of importing labour is expensive; and where more men have to be employed, "more tools, more scoops, more straight-work, more rails," are also required, thus enhancing the cost to the employer. But it is observable that the Employer's argument against the limitation has reference to existing low prices, and is based upon the supposition, which he attributes to the men, that the limitation of earnings actually limits production. The men "forget," he says, "or do not take into account, the fact, that the less business a master does, the more his coal is costing. . . . As an illustration,—Suppose

we take a colliery capable of producing 1,000 tons per week, the fixed expenses of that colliery will be at least £50 per week, that is, expenses that do not vary, whether 1,000 tons or 500 tons are worked. Now, when at full work, the cost on that head is 1*s.* per ton; but if, through the awkwardness of colliers, bad trade, or other causes, the production should fall off to 500 tons per week, the cost then is double, or 2*s.* per ton." It is obvious that, if "a very few weeks" measure the whole margin of difference between skilled and unskilled labour in collieries, such reasoning is in great measure beside the question as respects periods of brisk demand. The miner's limitation of his earnings in 1853-4 could only, one would think, have checked production to a very small degree; the effect of his abstinence from labour was mainly this, that the labourer's share of any advance in price, instead of being monopolized by the existing class of workers in mines, was distributed amongst a much larger number of hands; tending thus to deplete the workhouse, and to raise generally the price of unskilled labour, and the comforts of the labourer. For the entirely voluntary nature of the limitation, unenforced as it was at this time by any regular organization, shows clearly, as it seems to me, that the 24*s.* per week which it fixed as a maximum represented the miner's rough standard of comfort,—enough food, enough drink, enough shelter, enough clothing, enough amusement.* As many new hands as the limitation thus called into employ, so many customers did it gain for all articles of primary necessity, to the farmer, the builder, the manufacturer, the demand for whose produce would otherwise in many cases have been limited to the low cost per head of the workhouse, and of the remainder to the scanty wages of the agricultural labourer, always, it may be said, eked out by private charity. The home-market was thus stimulated in the wholesomest way, and the whole effect of the rule became directly opposite to that of an ordinary trade society seeking to establish a monopoly of its labour. The Sheffield artisan, when he had eaten and drank his fill of beef and ale, might spend the residue of his very high wages in champagne suppers, and in subscribing to a pack of harriers; the working collier, by limiting his labour at the very springtide of the demand for it, helped to raise others to the standard of comfort which he had secured for himself.

I am bound to say, indeed, that, having come to the conclusion that the miner's calling is not precisely the nearly skilless one which Mr. Tremenheere and employers generally represent it to be, I believe that the restraint upon production imposed by the limitation of earnings was somewhat greater than they state; and that this really accounts for the ill-humour of employers at being compelled to take on new hands, who yet, they declare, are so soon made equivalent to the old. Let us, however, consider the limitation of earnings, no longer from the employer's, but from the miner's point of view. Let us estimate, if

* Places of permanent employment at 24*s.* per week are to this day gladly taken by the most steady miners.

you like, his motive at the lowest. Let us suppose, if need be, that, so far as a limitation of earnings was recognised at all by the body of the miners, its main object, beyond relieving the individual labourer from a share of his toil, was as a means of class-warfare, to prevent the masters from accumulating stock, and so being able to do without the men. Let us look at it solely in its consequences.

Considering the strong incentives which the collier has to demand high wages, a voluntary limitation of his earnings may appear at first sight, from a purely commercial point of view, very anomalous.

But it must be recollected that the hazardous nature of the collier's labour is precisely that which renders it costly. Now a limitation of earnings, amounting for the industrious to a limitation of the hours of labour, by diminishing *pro tanto* the hazard, is really in itself a gain. The worker's life is rendered more valuable, his obligation to provide for his wife and family sits less heavily upon him. The Employer says, as we have seen (the case is no doubt quite exceptional), "I have known men come out of the pit at eleven o'clock in the morning, having gone in at six." Now, since the average of labour before the rise in prices was nine hours, this reduction to five, for the hard-working at least, swept away, *primâ facie*, four-ninths of the extra risk attendant on their calling; and although the less duration of the danger would be in part compensated by some additional risks, it still remains evident that, even as respects the miner's own labour, the conduct of the men was not, commercially speaking, so unwise as, *primâ facie*, might be concluded. When we consider, moreover, the axiom, "time is money," we may see that the hours of leisure thus won may, to the able and earnest, have been of incalculable value. What even if the great majority spent them in riotous self-indulgence? Still, the generation that has seen George and Robert Stephenson pass into their graves should not be the one to slight the value of a pitman's leisure.

It would be too much, indeed, I take it, to suppose that the hours spared from labour were generally devoted to intellectual or moral self-improvement. The colliers—although I have been singularly struck with the clear heads, sharp wits, and thorough manliness of mind of some whom I have met with—are generally represented as rude men, addicted to the coarser physical indulgences. The "employment of the miner," says one who knows them well, "is such as to fit 'roughs' alone. None scarcely will remain at it who have not strong backs and weak heads; the best men generally try to get out of it as soon as possible. As a body, therefore, they are animal, sensual, very ignorant. Strong excitements alone stir them; a drunken rout, a fight, a betting match, a dog race, will bring thousands together. They only act upon and for present and pressing motives and objects. They would never combine, never strike, without adequate cause from without. But, once roused, they are firm, dogged, true to a wonderful degree. Then the few, 'the salt of the earth,' take the front and guide the battle. The mass do not reason, but feel strongly and instinctively; often their instincts are right when their reasons are wrong. Give them good wages, and you will see them as busy as bees, at work or at play,

mining, drinking, betting, fighting."* Nor should it be overlooked, that the self-indulgence of the miner is sadly fostered by the payment of his wages at the unusually long interval of one fortnight as a rule, sometimes even a month;† since, receiving so much money in a lump, he has every temptation to squander it. But however much the period of high wages may have developed the practice of sensual indulgences, clearly the limitation of earnings was absolutely antagonistic thereto. Four and twenty shillings may be abundant wages for a labourer, but evidently he could eat and drink to a much larger figure; to limit his earnings to that sum is evidently to limit his eating and drinking. If men got drunk under the limitation rule, obviously they did so, not because they earned less, but because they received more. The limitation of earnings therefore, beneficial to the men physically, by reducing the margin of danger in their lives, was also beneficial to them morally, by putting a curb on their self-indulgence. Nor is this all. The exchange, as far as possible, of the confined underground life, with its heat, and its noisomeness, and its dirt, and its darkness, estranging a few from the immense majority of their fellow-creatures, for the free surface life of the ordinary worker, for the air of heaven, and the light of the sun, and the sight of all that air and sun make alive, brings with it other advantages. The men allege, in one of their petitions to Parliament, as "a well-known fact, that [the] longer the men are employed, the more liable are they to become allured by intoxicating drinks or other debasing habits." And when we consider the waste of nervous power which must be produced, over and above the effects of physical exertion, by the noxious gases which they inhale, it seems obvious that they speak only the truth. For it must not be forgotten that capital and labour earn their respective remunerations under very opposite conditions. The larger the profit, generally speaking, the easier it is made; a capitalist increases his outlay of capital to save his pains, and it is folly for him not to do so when he can. But, at least where the labourer's earnings resolve themselves into the amount of labour spent, the first earnings of the day are the easiest, the last the hardest; there is a point, beyond which for a man to spend his labour, is to spend his very self. Thus, a five or ten per cent. additional on earnings, which the capitalist will be wisely eager to secure, may represent for the labourer such an amount of exertion and exhaustion as not to seem worth the sacrifice of winning it. And in the miners' case, the exhaustion thus produced, by rendering them more careless, translates itself at once into danger of life and limb; thus justifying another statement of the men's petition, that the longer "men remain in the workings of a mine, the more liable [it is] to explosions from impure air and noxious gases."

Thus we see that the seeming economic heresy of the miners' limi-

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* See however *post*, as to the effects of a trade society in modifying this picture.

† Our friendly Employer, I am happy to say, informs me that his "pays" are weekly ones.

tation of earnings might in fact justify itself by a variety of considerations. One set-off to its advantages must indeed be noticed. Just so far as the coal-owners, to counteract the effects of such limitation, sought to flood their mines with new hands, the miner's abstinence from labour tended indirectly to multiply accidents. But for these, clearly, he could not be held accountable. Such accidents arose simply from this, that the employer's thirst for profit was greater than the miner's for wages. I repeat, however, that I do not believe the practice of the limitation to have been by any means universal. In many instances, I have reason to think, the miner earned up to the full limit of his powers, and the dangers arising from the introduction of new hands could not even indirectly be attributed to him.

At any rate, the limitation of earnings, so far as it checked production, tended also to delay and moderate that crisis which overproduction was now bringing on the trade.

III. *Over-production and Fall in Prices—The Reduction of Wages, and the Strike.*

The introduction of new labour, the Employer tells us, "gave rise to great competition in the sale of coal; *and although there existed agreements among the masters not to undersell each other*, yet this was done, first, in an underhand manner, by giving extra weight, and allowing extra discount; and afterwards by openly lowering the price.

"By dègrees, the average price of coal fell, from 6*s.* 8*d.* per ton (its highest point) to about 4*s.* 9*d.*, which afforded but very small remuneration to the master, considering the highly increased wages he was then giving. Hence the masters sought relief in reducing wages, by part of the previous advance of 30 per cent."

The first attempt made in this direction, of which I can find an authentic record, is shown by an advertisement inserted in the *Leeds Mercury*,—a journal essentially favourable to the employers,—March 17th, 1855, but erroneously referred to 1854 in the men's "Plain Statement." I give it from a copy obtained at the office of that journal.

"Resolutions of a meeting of the coal-masters for this district, held at the 'Wellington' Hotel, Leeds, March 13th, 1855:—

"1. Proposed, that a reduction of 9*d.* per day be made on the colliers' wages.

"2. Proposed, that a reduction of a 1½*d.* per day be made on the hurriers' wages.

"3. Proposed, that a reduction of 1*s.* per week be made on the byworkmen's wages.

"4. Proposed, that a resolution formerly passed, not to employ each other's men without note, shall remain in force at the present, and till rescinded.

"5. Proposed, that a reduction of the top men's wages take place, to be left to the discretion of their employers.

"6. Proposed, that no reduction take place in the price of house fire-coal till a meeting be called.

"7. Proposed, that 2*d.* per yard be deducted from the straight-work, board and end.

"The whole of these resolutions were carried unanimously. The alterations in the wages to take place at the commencement of next week's workings.

"GEORGE ELLISON, Esq., *in the chair.*"

These resolutions are remarkable in many respects. They do not purport, and are denied to be, those of the so-called "General Association" of coal-owners, which, it is stated, always met at the "White Horse," never at the "Wellington." But they prove the existence of another distinct organization of masters seeking to regulate both wages and prices. The fourth and sixth resolutions, for instance, clearly show that the meeting at which they were passed is not to be considered as an isolated event; that previous meetings for similar purposes had been and were intended to be held; that resolutions had been passed which were meant permanently to affect the relations between employer and employed. It must further be observed, that even in October, 1855, according to the West Yorkshire Coal-Owner's tables, the average price of coal was still 5*s.* 3*d.* per ton, or more than 21½ per cent. more than before the rise; in the previous March, it must have been higher still. Again, if we take the Employer's figure of 5*s.* 4*d.* a day as representing the collier's earnings at the enhanced rate of wages, a reduction of 9*d.* a day, under resolution one, would amount to upwards of 14 per cent., leaving him with less than 16 per cent. advance, against the employer's 21½. Lastly, it will not escape notice that, whilst lowering wages, the employers were anxious not to reduce prices to the public. The fourth resolution, moreover, was most offensive to the men. Under it, any man once dismissed through pique, might find himself cut off from all employment in the district.

I am not able to state the precise result of these resolutions. Some of them, I am assured, were acted upon; in the Gildersome district, wages were in fact reduced on this occasion. But as respects the reduction of wages, it was evidently not carried out till the period referred to by the Employer, when, prices having fallen still farther, the masters came to the resolution to take off one-half of the original advance, or 15 per cent. "The disposition evinced by the men, and their threats of a strike when a reduction was mentioned to them, showed that any lowering must be made simultaneously; and it was agreed, that if the men should turn out upon any master, he should be supported by the others."

It is declared by the "Employer," who gives us these details, that the "question of reduction of wages was never mooted"—in the General Association of Masters—"until the necessity of such a step was forced upon their attention." It is hardly worth while to point out that the Masters' Association, whether or not it had hitherto taken cognizance of wages, was in an economical point of view exactly analogous to a trade society, as seeking, on behalf of the seller, to regulate the price of coal, the quantity which might be given of it by weight, measure, &c., just as the worker's trade society attempts,

on behalf of the seller, to regulate the price of labour, the quantity of it which may be given by the day, hour, job, &c. When, indeed, in addition to their operations as a union of sellers, the masters also undertook others as a union of buyers, by resolving to pay no more than a certain price for labour, they acted as a worker's trade society might do which should resolve to pay no more than a certain price for bread, meat, ale, and the other raw materials of the labour which its members have to sell.

Owing to the absence of authentic records of the proceedings of the Masters' Association, I am unable to fix the date when the reduction was resolved upon. The men's "Plain Statement," however, mentions meetings of the masters at the "White Horse" in February and March, 1858, and Mr. Holmes specifies a notice given by Messrs. Kirby, Fenton and Co. on February 19th, which must probably have either immediately followed or preceded, and in fact I believe preceded, a meeting of the Masters' Association. The notice set out by Mr. Holmes, as well as in the "Plain Statement," under the date of March 13th, clearly indicates a previous meeting for concerted action amongst the employers. The account of the "Employer" is simply that "a month's notice was consequently given to the men, early in 1858, that a reduction in their wages, amounting to 15 per cent. upon the then rate, would take place; particularly mentioning that the state of the trade rendered such a step imperative." It should be observed, that the notice given by Mr. Holmes, and which the "Employer" has since admitted to be, "though not in the exact terms," yet "substantially correct," neither gives a full month, nor assigns any ground for the reduction, thus bearing out the statement of the men, that the reduction took place "without any explanation being given or reason adduced;" both statements being in fact no doubt equally true according to the writers' experience.* Again, it should not be overlooked that the 15 per cent. specified is *on existing*, i.e. *enhanced wages*, which would be 18½ per cent. on the original figure, or more than three-fifths, instead of one-half, of the advance. At the same time, I am assured that one-half the original advance was in many cases the real reduction.

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* The following printed notice, which has been supplied to me by the men as "one of the foundation stones" of their society, supplies additional evidence on this point. I omit the name of the colliery, that of the signer, and of the person to whom it is addressed.

"—— Colliery,
"18*th day of March*, 1858.

"To ——

"We hereby give you notice that a reduction of 15 per cent. on your wages will take place at the expiration of twenty-eight days from the date hereof.

"For —— and Company.
"(Signed) —— "

On the other hand, the "Employer" writes: "We certainly not only gave notice (which we considered we were bound to do by our rules), but we also had a conference with our men or a delegation from them, and then and there stated to them, plainly and unequivocally, our reasons for the reduction (lamenting its necessity), namely, the great reduction in the price of coal."

I shall not enter at length into the question, whether or not the reduction sought to be effected was "necessary." If the "Employer's" figures be adopted, the price of coal, being 4*s.* 9*d.* in place of 4*s.* 7*d.* before the rise, gave the master only 3·6 per cent. enhanced price. But if, taking, as before, the mean between Mr. Carter and the "Employer," we reckon the average price before the rise at 4*s.* 1½*d.*, then the enhancement of price was still more than 17 per cent., and assuming other expenses to remain the same, the reduction of 15 per cent. on wages, representing at least half the cost of production, would leave the master with a good share of the enhanced price. But what renders detail on the subject superfluous, is the fact already stated from Mr. Holmes, that the men have now recovered the whole of the advance, and had it restored to them while coal was no higher than when the reduction was attempted.* Unless, therefore, some entirely new order of facts, favourable to the cause of the employers, can be brought to light, it seems difficult to believe that a reduction, not necessary in November, 1859, was necessary in February, 1858.†

The plain fact seems to be, that in the unrecognised copartnery between capital and labour, the coal-owners had hitherto had the lion's share. When, through the fluctuations of trade, this came to pass into the men's hands, the masters sought to recover it by reducing wages. The men, on the other hand, having now got the lion's share, refused to yield it, especially under a depression of prices arising avowedly from the masters' own proceedings. Hence the strike.

IV. *The Miners' Local Association—The Lock-out—The West Yorkshire Coal-Owners' Circular.*

We have seen by the "Employer's" statement, that when the notice of reduction was issued, a general lock-out was already in principle decided on, in the event of any partial strike. The employers had accurately foreseen the tactics of the men.

"When the notice expired, and began to be acted upon, the colliers demurred, and three separate collieries were selected by the operatives' delegates to be stopped, until the masters of those particular collieries should consent to give the former wages; the men on strike being supported by those at work on the reduction; and it was planned, that when this object should be attained, then two or three other masters should be similarly treated, thus subduing the employers by piecemeal. The associated masters, in consequence, determined to support those of their own body, whose men were on strike, by contributing the 15 per cent. stopped from their men in

* A curious fact has indeed been mentioned to me, which I have been unable as yet to verify, that whilst the other associated masters reduced wages, the Gildersome district of masters *advanced* them, and of course got both men and trade from the other districts.

† The "Employer" indeed states in a letter which I have received from him, that between 1858 and 1859, "the pit price of 'seconds' coal to most districts advanced 6*d.* per ton—namely, from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, and 'slack' also advanced in price to a certain extent." But I learn from the Leeds coal-merchant before referred to, that this advance took place soon *after* the men got their second 7½ per cent.

work (and something extra if required) towards a fund for that purpose. Thus the battle began, and continued for six months; the question being which side should first tire." This account is substantially the same as that of the "Plain Statement," except that the latter refers the masters' resolution to support those of their number who might be struck against to an apparently earlier period. But the former omits one very important point—that it was now, and now only, that a regular organization was formed amongst the men.* Whatever, therefore, may be the case in other trades, the Miners' Association, of the formation of which a brief account will be found in Mr. Holmes's paper, was strictly constituted in self-defence of their class-interest against an actual reduction of wages, and when the example of combination had been set to the men for many years already by their employers.

The men's association was at this time simply a local one. The "Special General Rules for the Government of the Miners' Association of the West Yorkshire District, established in March, 1858," were those of an almost pure trade society. The Association was to consist of "a general board of directors, and subordinate societies, each governed by its own officers." No member of the Association was to be "allowed to work more than eight hours per day, or to earn more than 3*s.* 5*d.* per day, under the 15 per cent. reduction, and to earn 4*s.* per day when the 15 per cent. is obtained, and no more." The "Districts" into which the Association was to be divided were to have "the power to sanction any strike or strikes, to the amount of 10 per cent. on the number of members in the said District, for any just and reasonable advance of wages for the labour of the miner, or to prevent any unjust reduction of the wages of the miner;" but "on no account" was the District to "sanction any strike to exceed the above amount, without having the permission of the general board." Where a District sanctioned any Society "to strike or cease work," the District was itself to provide "a fund for the support of the men on strike," paying 7*s.* a week to every man, 3*s.* 6*d.* a week to boys above fifteen, 1*s.* 9*d.* to boys from ten to fifteen, and 1*s.* per week to children under ten; but no Society was to be "allowed to strike or cease work on any account without having the sanction of the District Committee." Each separate Society was to provide a fund for the relief of members becoming "lame by accident while attending to their daily labour," with power to fix the rate of contributions and the amount of benefit. A fine of half-a-crown, or three months' suspension from all benefits, was inflicted on members making known to strangers anything transacted or said at meetings "which would be likely to cause an injury to the Society." But the Association was not to "support or defend any member who should in any way

* I say a "regular" organization. I am informed indeed, by the "Employer," that in the year 1853 the men "combined against the West Riding Colliery, Messrs. Pope and Pearson, and a systematized support of the colliers of those gentlemen took place, for some months, during a strike against them." It is not, however, alleged that this was more than a temporary affair.

violate the laws of the country, and by so doing lose his employment."

A trade organization of so militant a character was sure to meet with determined resistance. The masters whose men were on strike addressed circulars to their colleagues, requesting them not to employ them.*

The history of the strike proper will be found at sufficient length in Mr. Holmes's paper. The masters of course sought to meet it by introducing fresh hands, who were, the "Employer" states from his own experience, "hooted, and hissed, and called black sheep;" adding, however, "there was no actual violence used." The work of these men was however so far from sufficient—the contributions of, or for the men, were either so much more freely given, or were made to go so much farther, than the support of the masters to those among them who were struck against—that the masters at last deemed themselves compelled to that terrible measure of a lock-out, by which the moneyed man endeavours to starve the worker into submission.

"In September, 1858," writes the "Employer," "the associated masters whose collieries were at work (in order to bring things to a crisis) determined to stop *their* works also, and thus cut off the relief afforded by their men to those on strike; and requiring them, before being allowed to resume work, to sign a paper engaging not to support any men who may have turned out; also agreeing to work eight hours per day when required." These resolutions (which are assigned by the men to the 6th or 7th September) are somewhat differently given in the "Plain Statement" and by Mr. Holmes. The former version is virtually identical with the fourth statement of the "Employers' Address to the Public," to be hereafter noticed, in which "the West Yorkshire coal-owners" declare, "that the men at all collieries will be allowed to resume work on promising to conform to the colliery rules, relinquish the restrictive principle, work eight hours per day when required, and agreeing to abandon the Union." †

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* The following is a copy of one of these documents, which I have taken myself from the original. It is all in print, except the words in italics.

"—— Colliery, near ——
April 15th, 1858.

"To Messrs. —— and Co.

"*Gentlemen*,

"Below we beg to hand a list of underground workmen, now on strike at our —— Colliery, and shall feel obliged if you will abstain from employing any, should they apply to you for work, unless they bring proper clearance papers signed by us.

"Yours faithfully,
"—— and Son."

(218 printed names follow.)

† The following is an exact copy (names omitted) of the declaration required, from an original in the hand of the coal-owner:

"*For the signature of the Men.*

"We the undersigned hereby agree to work for —— and Son in accordance with the general rules and bye-laws of —— Colliery (a copy of which rules and bye-

It is of course clearly understood that the resumption of work meant was only at the 15 per cent. reduction.

These resolutions obviously interfere with the freedom of action of the men no less than the before quoted rules of the Miners' Association. We observe in them the recurrence of a feature now of frequent introduction in such contests, that of a declaration to be signed by the worker.* The miner was required to bind himself not to dispose of his own money according to his own will; to work under such regulations as his master might impose. The subject of these "colliery rules," as the "Employer" terms them, deserves that we should dwell an instant upon it. The Coal Mines Inspection Act, 18 & 19 Vict. cap. 108, enacts certain "general rules to be observed in all coal-mines" (s. 4), and that, "in addition to the general rules," there shall be established and observed in every coal-mine or colliery such "special rules, for the conduct and guidance of the persons acting in the management of such coal-mine or colliery, and of all persons employed in or about the same, as under the particular state and circumstances of such coal-mine or colliery may appear best calculated to prevent dangerous accidents," which special rules are made subject to the approval of a secretary of state. But in addition to both general and special rules, there are also, I believe, in every colliery, *bye-laws*, regulating the relations between masters and men, and subject to no official scrutiny or sanction; and it is really these (as the form given above in a note will show) to which the masters' resolutions sought to bind the men to conform, they being already bound by law to observe the others. Now these bye-laws, printed generally if not universally by the firms, and given or sold by them to the men, are in many cases most stringent. In three sets which I have before me,† the miner is made to lose the value of his "corf" if sent to bank otherwise than well filled or cleaned;‡ thus literally confiscating the fruits of the miner's labour if it does not reach the precise point of cleanliness and accuracy which the master or his local representative may insist on.§ All three have such a tone of

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laws we have received), and at the wages current at —— Colliery since the 3rd of April, 1858, and we also agree to work, when required, eight hours per day, and without limitation of quantity.

"A man who is known to contribute to the Union will be discharged."

* The Bradford stone-masons lately sought to enforce the signature of a "declaration" on their employers.

† "White Horse," "Neville Hill," and "Whitwood and Fairies Hill" Collieries.

‡ "If any corf be sent to bank either improperly or imperfectly filled or cleaned, the workman will forfeit all claim in respect of it."—*Whitwood Rules.* (The others are equivalent.)

It should be remembered, moreover, that it is a very general complaint amongst the men, that the corves are made to contain more coal than they are professed to do.

§ The confiscation of corves on this ground figures prominently among the grievances of the Scotch miners, in Mr. Alexander Macdonald's pamphlet, "Miners' Grievances." But the same complaint is still made in West Yorkshire.

rigour about them, they bristle so with fines and penalties,* that they suggest rather a prison than a trading concern. For any breach of these bye-laws the miner is liable to a fine "not exceeding 10*s.*, nor less than 1*s.*," to be levied by the agent; "for flagrant disobedience or misconduct, the offender may be fined, or immediately dismissed, or taken before the magistrate." Two provisions especially, of the "White Horse" Colliery, quoted in the "Plain Statement," but which I copy from the actual bye-laws above referred to, are so exorbitant, that our friendly "Employer" says of them: "I never saw, or heard of such a rule as here quoted, and do not believe such a one exists at any colliery in the West Riding,"—a statement which only exemplifies the mutual ignorance which may prevail among employers as to each other's proceedings. Here they are:—

"8. Any miner or other workman who neglects, or absents himself from, work, unless prevented from working by sickness or accident, of which he shall furnish the agent with a medical certificate in proof thereof, will be fined 1*s.* per day for every working day he so absents himself, excepting Saturday, when a fine of 2*s.* will be levied if he so absents himself. 9. A fine of 1*s.* will be levied on every miner, hurrier, or other workman, who ascends the pit before two o'clock in the afternoon, unless compelled by sickness or accident, of which he shall acquaint a deputy or the under-viewer, who shall give him an order to ascend if requisite." Assuming, as I have no doubt, that such bye-laws as the last are wholly exceptional, they are sufficient to show the folly of the masters in attempting to enforce, or seeming to do so, by collective action, such excesses of individual strictness, to use no harsher term, as they represent.†

To support their proceedings, the masters, in the month of October, 1858, issued the circular before referred to, headed "Colliers' Strike," and which will be found at full length in Mr. Tremenheere's Report. Its strongest points are of course those which attack the rules of the Miners' Association. The masters asserted, 1st. That they had only taken off half of the advance made in 1853,—a statement which, if I read the notice of reduction aright, is under the truth. 2nd. That the miners could, at the reduced rate, earn 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* for eight hours' work, clear of deduction. 3rd. That "the increased staff of officers rendered essential at every colliery, in order to conform to the recent enactments of Parliament, together with the late and present depressed state of trade," rendered the rate of wages as "liberal" as could be afforded—which is sufficiently disposed of by subsequent events, as well as the 4th point, stating the conditions on

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* I am at a loss to account for the practice of employers' fines, which is to be found in almost every trade. What foundation has it? It is directly contrary to Magna Charta.

† The bye-laws generally require (except on Saturdays) ten hours' clear work, exclusive of meal times, of "every carpenter, blacksmith, sawyer, wood-cutter, mechanic, pick-sharpener, bricklayer, mason, coke-burner, coal-picker, or other labourer," employed in or about the collieries. But hewers are not, I understand, held to be included in this enumeration.

which the men would be "allowed to resume work." They declared, 5thly, "That the present struggle is not one based on the question of wages alone, but is in fact a struggle for the entire mastery between the employers and the employed," and adduced as proofs of "the spirit of dictation, towards both their masters and their fellow-workmen, evinced by the colliers," besides rule 17 of the Miners' Association, the fact, that "within the last few months several masters have received notices from their men that unless certain individuals obnoxious to the Unionists were summarily dismissed, the whole of the men employed intended to strike; also, *vice versâ*, that if such obnoxious men were taken on, the same consequences would ensue." 6thly. Referring to the eighth rule of the Miners' Association, they declared, "that unless the masters make a firm stand against their men's unfair demands in the first instance, the present state of agitation and ferment will be prolonged indefinitely." In conclusion, they denied *in toto* that the men had exhausted every means for coming to an amicable settlement; repeated the charge of dictation; saw no reason why miners should be alone exempted from bearing their due share of occasional depression; declared that "the colliers refuse, at all collieries, to work for stock," and finally entreated "the kind-hearted not blindly to be led away by the false and garbled statements issued by the demagogues and stump-orators, who for interested motives are endeavouring to lead the colliers astray, to their own ultimate ruin."

Such then was the masters' case in defence of the lock-out, which unfortunately Mr. Tremenheere has alone reproduced. I will make only two observations upon it. First, let it be observed that it does not allege one single act of personal violence on the part of the men. Next, that in conjunction with the fact of the lock-out, it wholly disposes of the masters' usual allegation, that the miner's labour is an unskilled one, and that all the requisite skill can be acquired in a few weeks. Evidently, if this were so, with the whole market of unskilled labour to pick from, the employers never would have ventured on such a measure as the closing of their pits.

V. *The attempted Arbitration.—The Miners' General Association.—The "Plain Statement."—Close of the Lock-out and Strike.*

The attempt to compel the worker to give up what organization he may have for keeping up wages is never less likely to succeed (otherwise than in appearance) than when coupled with an endeavour actually to reduce wages. "Nine-tenths of the colliers," the Employer states, "refused to comply with these conditions, and the struggle was continued with increased intensity, and with much extended operation, for about two months longer." For the detailed history of the lock-out I must again refer to Mr. Holmes's paper. The whole of each class, it may be said, was now (7th October) in array against the other. 2,400 men and boys were locked out, making, with those already on strike, about 3,200 out of work. "The men who had been payers," says the "Plain Statement," "of from two to three shillings per week, now became receivers, and the funds which were slowly accu-

mulated became immediately drained." If it be recollected that we have not before us, as in the case of the Amalgamated Engineers' strike and lock-out, or that of the Builders, a well-established trade organization, disposing, at the very beginning of hostilities, of an accumulated capital, but one first struggling into existence upon an actual reduction of wages, it will be seen how difficult was the position of the men, in the face of the experienced combination of the masters.

That they met this ominous position with the most determined constancy is not denied by those even who most disapprove of their proceedings. The masters' lock-out moreover, although appealing to the fellow-feelings of capitalists of all classes, was yet, in its immediate effects, singularly inconvenient to the public. Although intended to diminish the cost of production, it began, like any other strike, by diminishing the supply of the article produced, and so raising its price; whilst the sudden stoppage of weekly wages reduced the local traders to a state often bordering on insolvency. The masters were of course always trying to introduce new men. "We turned top-hands into colliers as well as we could," says the Employer in his examination; "we paid them by the day at the same rate as we paid them at their own work... It cost us more per ton to employ these men than the regular colliers... There were several common labourers who went down on this occasion... On this occasion, when we employed these unskilled labourers, *we raised the price of coal, because the supply was short.*" Partly, no doubt, stimulated by the inconveniences of the lock-out, partly by sympathy for the sufferings of the men and their families, the outside public now began to move in the matter. The vain efforts at compromise and arbitration which occupied the month of October are set forth in the "Plain Statement" and in Mr. Holmes's paper, but find no place in the "Employer's" account, or in Mr. Tremenheere's report. This was the last: A respectful memorial to the employers, requesting them to submit to arbitration, was signed by Dr. Hook, the Vicar of Leeds, "sundry leading firms, and justices of the peace;" was acceded to by the men—I use the words to me of one who signed it—in the most unreserved manner; and was laid before a meeting of employers on the 21st of October. The request was refused on the 28th, point blank, and a deputation authorized by the miners to propose certain terms of concession could not even obtain an interview.

After this, say the men, they had "no other course but to fight it out." But the local Association hitherto formed was too weak to carry on the contest single-handed. The "Miners' Association of the West Yorkshire District" now sought to expand into the "Miners' Association of the United Kingdom," which was established, November 9th, 1858, at the "Coal-miners' Conference, held at the Old George Inn, Briggate, Leeds." The rules of this new body, which retain little more than the preamble of the former ones, bear the most genuine stamp at once of the rough uncultivated class from which they emanate, and of the circumstances under which they were compiled. The objects of the Association were, "1st. To support such

as may be thrown out of employment or victimized for taking an active, consistent and upright part in promoting the welfare of our Association, viz., having attended its meetings, contributed to its funds, or in any other way promoted its establishment. 2nd. To such [*sic*] as may be incapacitated from following their own employment by accident, and should death ensue, an allowance for their interment. 3rd. To the payment of a certain sum to such as may be permanently injured, and to every member's widow."

The society was therefore still primarily a trade society. It strove no longer indeed expressly to regulate work and wages, though seeking to "support those who may be thrown out of employment, or victimized." But it sought also to provide, not only for cases of accident (both by allowances and funeral expenses), but for "any member's widow." It was now to operate by means of a half-yearly conference, local lodges, "composed of members employed in and about all collieries," and district meetings, consisting of "representatives from the various lodges or collieries;" the main authority residing, however, with the district meetings. I am informed, however, that owing to the differences of practice in the various mining districts, this General Association has never been carried out, although its rules have served as the foundation of those of the various district societies, which I shall have to notice hereafter.

The resolutions of the Coal-miners' Conference, held at Leeds, as mentioned above, from the 9th to the 13th November, indicate better even than the rules of the projected General Association, the scope which was now given to the warfare of classes. The 13th resolution bore, "that a levy of 1*s.* per fortnight be laid on the miners in Durham, Northumberland and Derbyshire"; the 15th, "that we do all in our power to assist the men of Northumberland and Durham in their endeavours to engage Mr. Roberts" (*i. e.* the so-called "miners' attorney-general"), "providing Mr. Roberts will agree to transact all legal business connected with the Miners' Association at the salary of £800 a year; Mr. Roberts to bear his own expenses, and to reside in the centre of the mining districts." 5,000 "Conference Addresses" were to be printed, and 15,000 rules. A petition to Parliament for short hours was proposed to be prepared at the next convention; "the authors of all (!) communications to the papers on ventilation and the short hours' question" were requested to send a copy of the same to the general secretary. The wind-up is remarkable: "The present convention, in conclusion, strongly advise all districts to use their best endeavours to promote a good understanding with their employers, and to resist all movements tending to either 'strikes or lock-outs.'"

In answer to the Employers' circular, the men put forth different placards, and latterly their "Plain Statement," read at a public meeting at the Court-house, Leeds, November 11, 1858. Allowing for haste, and for the heats of the moment, the document appears to me on many points to meet the case of the employers, and to have at least deserved some mention in Mr. Tremenheere's report. It mis-

states indeed the date of the Leeds masters' resolutions of the 13th March, 1855, and erroneously, as it would seem, attributes them to the General Association of Coal-owners, and one or two of its figures as to price are contested; but these are all the corrections of fact, except one clearly unfounded, which have been suggested respecting it, after a hostile examination by a most competent person. The "Plain Statement" does not indeed attempt to defend the rules of the West Yorkshire Miners' Association, seeing that this body was intended to be superseded by the General Association. But it replies to the charge of dictation, and unfair demands, by the men's offer to arbitrate, and the masters' refusal. It denies that the men "refuse at all collieries to work for stock," admitting that they have done so in the face of a lock-out, when to stock at 15 per cent. reduction would have been "to cut our own throats," and not denying that, "as a body, miners dislike to work for stock." It charges the masters with, on their side, harbouring obnoxious men, and with an abusive exercise of the system of "clearance papers," the existence of which is indeed proved by the Leeds masters' resolutions of 1855. The allegation that the Government requirements increase the cost of mining, it denies to be true in the long run, as such requirements insure safety.

The question of the men's alleged refusal to work for stock, may perhaps deserve that we should dwell a moment over it. The charge is repeated by the "Employer." "Our men," he says in his examination, "will not allow us to keep stocks of coal. If we have no vessels to load, or wagons to load, the men come out immediately. It is their own loss, as well as ours. The object is, that when they strike we may not be independent of them. We have some orders that must be supplied immediately, but which we cannot supply for several days, for want of a stock. There is also another inconvenience; there are two sorts of coal in the same seam (best coal and inferior coal), and we have sometimes orders for the second quality and not for the best, and in such cases our men will not allow us to stock the best coal, which we are compelled to get at the same time, so that we are obliged to sell it as seconds. We used to sell twice as much best coal as seconds, and now we sell twice as much seconds as best. The natural proportion in the seam, is two of best coal, to one of seconds."

The "Plain Statement," on the other hand, admitting, as I have said, the men's dislike to work for stock, assigns for reason, that they find by universal experience, when they are so working, that they are "docked" in their corves, and "hampered by all sorts of unreasonable pretences" to reduce wages; "and therefore, as the men say, they had 'raither lake (play) for nout then wark for nout.'" If, indeed, we were to take strictly the "Employer's" statements as to the little remunerative character of coal-mining, and the heaviness of the item of labour in the cost of production, it would seem somewhat improbable that the coal-owner should often have a strong *bonâ fide* interest in working for stock at ordinary wages, or be seriously

injured by the men's refusal to do so. His business, it should be observed, is not damaged by occasional interruptions, but in fact requires them,—thus essentially distinguishing his case from that of the iron-master and other employers, who suffer greatly by any suspension of their works. Thus, in a lecture on the "West Yorkshire Coal-strikes," by the Rev. W. R. Bowditch, incumbent of St. Andrew's, Wakefield,—a writer, as before mentioned, strongly adverse to the men—an anecdote is introduced, showing that, when trade is bad, a coal-owner is considered "lucky" in having his men on strike, as he thereby loses nothing, instead of working at a loss. I am bound to add in conclusion on this point, that the men whom I have spoken with deny most strongly that their dislike to work for stock goes to the length of refusal, otherwise than during a conflict.

The masters' refusal to submit to arbitration, and the "Plain Statement," appear at all events to have now strongly enlisted the public feeling in favour of the men, as will be seen from Mr. Holmes's paper. On the other hand, the check upon production was beginning to tell upon prices, whilst the want of skilled hands was more and more felt in the mines. At the end of November, "one of the masters, unknown to the others," writes the Employer, "compromised the matter with his men (through the medium of the treasurer of the Colliers' Union, Mr. R. Bayldon*), by agreeing to reduce only 7½ per cent. and without requiring any stipulation as to the men not supporting strikes. The example being set, and the masters' regulations being violated, all the other employers did the same, and the strike ended; the masters having established, and the men submitted to, a reduction of 7½ per cent. upon their former wages; but the men still receiving 22 per cent. more than prior to 1853." It is obvious that, although our friend speaks of the masters having "established" this reduction, yet their defeat was nevertheless complete, since the men resumed work without submitting to *any one* of the conditions on which alone, according to the masters' circular, they were to be "allowed" to do so. It is much to be regretted that Mr. Tremenheere should have been misled into speaking of this as of "the men accepting the masters' terms."

The termination of the contest seems to have been in general thankfully received by the men. "We are happy to say it is now over," say the Wakefield and Methley District in their final balance-sheet for the strike period, "and all the pits are at work again, and we trust that all bitterness of spirit engendered in our trade between masters and men, and among fellow-workmen, will for ever cease, but that all will remember the precept, 'Peace on earth, goodwill towards men.' We forbear further to refer to the past, as we wish

* The credit of having brought this lamentable struggle to a close is assigned by others to Mr. Carter and Mr. Holmes. The men insist most positively on this point. Mr. Bayldon was only treasurer of the Methley district.

with all our hearts that these words may have their full weight with us." Still, jealousy was no doubt felt towards those who had taken work on the terms of the lock-out. "It was insisted by the regular colliers," says the Employer in his evidence, "when they came to work again, that we should dismiss these new hands, but we refused." Every right-minded employer no doubt did the same. "I do not think," adds however the witness, "the *leaders* of the Union insisted on the dismissal of these men; I think it was the doing of our men only. I think the leaders of trades' unions cannot always bridle their followers." On the other hand, it is alleged by the secretary to the Miners' Association, that it is "generally" the masters or their agents who influence the old hands to drive their temporary substitutes away, because they lose by them. I believe indeed there is no doubt that these "top hands" (often Irish), if retained as colliers, are found invariably afterwards the noisiest in asserting their rights as such against the masters.

It should not indeed be forgotten that although the great West Yorkshire strike terminated on the 18th December, 1858, the district did not become free from partial ones. The general secretary to the Miners' Association, in a paper supplied to this Committee, states that the last strike terminated on June the 6th (1859), and that at the time of his writing there were "110 men locked out."

Nor would this present paper be complete without some mention of the *South* Yorkshire coal-strike, which was in great measure simultaneous with, and ran parallel to, that in West Yorkshire, but has attracted far less public attention. The South Yorkshire coal-miner appears, from information I have received from the men, to be the best paid of all the collier class; but he is paid on a different system from the West Yorkshireman, and whilst his earnings are large, the deductions are very large also, and apparently peculiar. Suffice it to say of this strike, which was equally followed by a lock-out, that it terminated (if I am informed aright) without even the 7½ per cent. reduction which was temporarily accepted by the colliers of West Yorkshire. Some reference to the strike, but not to the issue of it, will be found in Mr. Tremenheere's report. I am sorry to say a lock-out on the part of the South Yorkshire employers has lately taken place.

VI. *Results of the Strike.—Cost.—Moral Effects.—Further Proceedings of the Masters' and Miners' Associations.*

If we seek now to count the cost of this strike and lock-out, we may find it reckoned by Mr. Holmes in his paper at £100,000 in all, of which £53,725 4*s.* 1*d.* fell on the men, namely £45,720 in wages, and £8,005 4*s.* 1*d.* in subscriptions. A fearful loss, no doubt, to the community, but if we take the workers' point of view, perhaps hardly what we think it to be. For if we take 1*s.* 9½*d.* per week (7½ per cent. on 24*s.*) as the average value *won* per man, and 9*d.* per week (7½ per cent. on 10*s.*) as the average value won per boy,—using Mr. Holmes's figures of 2,600 men and 800 boys as giving the strength of the labour thrown out of employment,—then the 7½ per cent.

extra will represent £255 8*s.* 4*d.* per week, or £13,282 10*s.* per annum, secured through the strike. In other words, supposing there were no fresh contests, and that the wages remained 7½ per cent. higher than they might have done, should the miners have submitted to the entire reduction, the whole capital laid out by the men would have paid itself in a trifle over four years out of the increased earnings; and even so, I believe that, on the one hand, the loss in wages would be somewhat overstated, as many of the colliers no doubt found more or less remunerative employment, and on the other, that the amount of gain would be understated, as the increase of wages reached men who were actually at work on the employers' terms. But, inasmuch as we know that 7½ per cent. more was won back within a year, raising thereby the yearly gain of £13,282 10*s.* to £26,565, it is probable that the net economic result, in the working man's eyes, is this; a strike, at first only partially successful, like the West Yorkshire one of 1858, may pay itself within three years,—the whole organization of a trade society being thrown in as a bonus.

We may, or we may not, agree in this view of the question, which is no doubt a very partial one at best; looking only to the class interest of the worker, and not even taking into account the sufferings of the women and children of his class during a strike, and the positive injury to their health thereby produced.* But whether we do or not so agree, it is important for us to understand that this *is* a view taken by the working man of strikes and trade societies, as shown by Mr. Dunning's speech at the Bradford Conference, and his recent pamphlet. The commercial principles on which the worker withholds the supply of labour are precisely those on which any dealer holds back a given article to enhance its price, nor should we dream in the latter case of reckoning the value of the speculation by the profit foregone only, instead of by that ultimately realized.

So far the economic results of the strike. As respects the moral ones, here is the testimony of one who is indeed an interested witness,—the general secretary to the Miners' Association.

"As to the effects of the strikes, they have been good. Habits of prudence, economy, and forethought have been instilled into the minds of our members; moral benefits have resulted from the men meeting often together, to discuss their grievances, hear lectures," &c. He adds this curious fact in the economics of trades' unions: "Members pay the best and in the greatest numbers, when the payments are heaviest; the reason for this is, that the better portion of the members see a greater necessity for coming forward . . . men

* A letter from one of the most earnest advocates of the claims of the men, dated June 30, 1859, speaks of "the increased mortality resulting from the poverty and want experienced during the strike. Women and children have died very extensively this spring and summer, owing (so the surgeons and nurses say) to the starvation of previous months. Diphtheria and fever have been very fatal among children; while many women have died during pregnancy, or just after, from debility."

with the greatest families are the best members, and the truest to the cause."*

Another friend to the men writes (February 8, 1860): "Nearly all the objectionable bye-laws are rescinded, and the men are now treated with a consideration previously unknown."

Again, June 21, 1860: "At present I am assured the men hereabout were never so well treated, paid, or worked before. Messrs. —— are especially kind and attentive to their men, either as to complaints or suggestions for improvements; and certainly they, as well as the men, will be the better for it. And this the men place as due to the strike."

Our friend the Employer's paper was drawn up at a time when the men were still working at 7½ per cent. reduction, and threatening to turn out unless it were restored, so that much of what he says on the subject, as well as upon the 4*s.* limitation of earnings, supported by the men on the ground of the need of raising prices, would now be out of place. Taking, however, the Miners' Associations as the main abiding result of the strike, it is important to observe that in his examination, whilst giving his testimony against trades' unions, as being at present not beneficial, and giving the men discontented notions, he adds: "I believe that trades' unions, if properly conducted, would be beneficial to the workmen rather than otherwise, but the promoters and head-men of the trades' unions cannot keep under those that belong to them. I think in many cases trades' unions would, *if properly conducted*, also be of benefit to the employer, in keeping in check unprincipled employers." And he is "disposed to think" that without combination the workmen "could not secure" a fair rise in wages when improperly withheld; "public opinion would hardly be sufficient to secure them that."

The implied testimony of the "Employer" to the "promoters and head-men" of trade societies should be observed, as it effectually disposes of the passage at the close of the employers' circular in defence of the lock-out, where they speak of the "demagogues and stump-orators," who, "for interested motives," endeavour "to lead the colliers astray;" and it exactly tallies, on the other hand, with

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* The following comparison between a "society pit" and a "non-society pit" is given by the same witness in another communication:—

"At the extremes of our district there are two collieries, ten miles apart. They both belong to the same proprietor; at each about the same number of hands are employed. Both joined the society at its commencement in 1858, one soon fell away: the other has remained true and active. . . . At the union place, a general air of comfort and respectability in the personal appearance of our men and their families is evident; rectitude of conduct is seldom interfered with by vicious indulgences; the pig here takes the place of the bull-pup and the game-cock. Go over to the other place, you will find the public-house well frequented; the general conversation, mingled with the rattle of the dominoes, will be loud and deafening; the general topics of conversation will be found to turn on cock or dog-fighting, and other matters recorded in *Bell's Life* (their gospel) and *Fistiana*. . . . This is the only corner of our district where females are employed on the pit-bank."

the interesting statement of Mr. Holmes in his paper, that the men selected as their leaders "the very best of their class," men who were "the last to strike and the first to concede," and who, so far from acting "for interested motives," refused all special remuneration, and would only "share penny for penny" with the rest "of the lock-outs," *i.e.* taking "from 10*d.* to 4*s.* weekly." One cannot but regret after this that a random libel like that contained in the statement of the West Yorkshire coal-owners should have been reproduced without contradiction in an official document such as Mr. Tremenheere's report.

If we now look to the further proceedings of the trade organizations of employers and employed, the one of which occasioned, and the other or others of which maintained the strike, we shall find indeed little additional to say of the Coal-Owners' Association, seeing the habitual secrecy in which it shrouds itself. It has not even now, I learn from the "Employer," a paid secretary, and communications addressed to the gentleman who filled that office are answered by a member of the Association. It seems, however, lately to have devoted its attention to the forming "a sort of insurance society against strikes," to use the Employer's words, according to the rules of which it is proposed that each master, entering as a member, shall subscribe a certain sum "per operative in his employ per week towards a fund," and in case his colliers strike, he shall receive from that fund so much per man per week, "for as many men as he has subscribed for, so long as his colliers remain out;" it not being, however, "imperative upon any master to subscribe for *all* the men whom he employs, but only for so many as he thinks proper to enter; and the remuneration or compensation, in case of a strike, shall be proportional."

The men shrink far less from publicity. The Miners' Conference met again, at Ashton-under-Lyne, on May 2nd, 1859, and the five following days. Much of its time seems to have been spent in settling the frame of a petition to Parliament of the workers in coal and iron-stone of Great Britain and Ireland; a very remarkable document, though excessive in its demands, which will be found referred to, and extracted from, in Mr. Tremenheere's report. It sought a limitation of the hours of labour in mines; compulsory education for children under fourteen; compulsory appliances for safety; a special tax on the sale of coals, for the support of miners' widows and orphans, the education of their children, and the establishment of a miners' home for disabled miners; and lastly, the establishment of the apprenticeship system among the mining population. Two thousand copies of the petition, with reasons in support of it, were ordered to be printed, and a deputation was sent to London to urge it, whilst a levy of 3*d.* per member was directed to be raised in all districts, and 1*d.* per month afterwards, "to meet Parliamentary and other petition expenses." It was further resolved that, as the Miners' Inspection Act would terminate in 1860, the whole of the amalgamated districts should use their efforts to "procure a better Act" for the

purpose. The Conference further took cognizance of "the binding system in the counties of Northumberland and Durham,"—of the lock-out of the "North Warwickshire miners,"—and prepared the following important series of questions, to be answered by the coal and iron-stone miners in England and Wales :—

1. What is the age of the oldest man engaged in your colliery or district, and the average duration of life?
2. What is the length of hours worked by the men and boys under fourteen years of age in your pit?
3. Have the boys time to attend schools if willing?
4. How many men and how many boys are employed in your colliery or iron-stone mine?
5. What is the state of the ventilation in your colliery or iron-stone mine?
6. How is the Inspection Act carried out in your colliery or district?
7. Does your employer adopt any means for the education of young persons employed in his mines?

Questions obviously calculated to elicit most valuable information.

Mr. Tremenheere says of the petition and the reasons accompanying it, that "the tone and language adopted are deserving of all respect," and deems it "encouraging and satisfactory" that the men should have suggested the high standard of education set out in the "Reasons." He further informs us that the several points of the petition were discussed at the meeting of the Mining Association of Great Britain, in March, 1859, but regrets to say that, as respects education, the meeting expressed "an opinion adverse to legislation in any form."

A further conference of miners appears to have taken place in November, 1859, of which, however, I have not received the minutes. From it however appears to have emanated a petition on the subject of the inspection of coal-mines, which, in its latest form, is appended to this paper, together with a statement, addressed to "the Honourable Members of the Commons House of Parliament," and embodying, in an amended shape and with additional developments, the petition and reasons referred to by Mr. Tremenheere. The two together appear to me, I must say, however we may differ from some of the views and demands expressed, the most remarkable and creditable products hitherto of trade organization among working men. It is satisfactory to add, that educational clauses have, on the representation of the men, been introduced into the new Collieries Inspection Bill, the progress of which a deputation of five, representing respectively the colliery districts of West Yorkshire, South Yorkshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire, Lancashire and Cheshire, and Scotland, was sent to London to watch. I have before stated that the (General) "Miners' Association of the United Kingdom" has failed to establish itself, although partly replaced by a temporary organization, called the "Amalgamated Union," for the express purpose of obtaining a good Inspection Act. There are, however, germs of local organization which might be easily

quickened into life for a more energetic class-resistance even than that which triumphed in 1858, existing in the shape of district trade societies, the laws of three of which are before me.

The "Miners' Association of the Adwalton and Drighlington District, established January, 1859" (rules "revised and improved, June, 1860"), consists "of collieries or lodges, composed of miners, bywork men and boys employed in collieries," under the authority of "a district board of directors," "composed of one delegate from each colliery or lodge, and three principal officers for the district." Its object is, to raise a fund for insuring "a sum of money to be paid to the members who may be duly authorized by the district board of directors to strike or cease work to obtain any just and reasonable advance of wages for the labour of the members, or to prevent any unjust reduction of wages for the labour of the members, and to such as may be thrown out of employment or victimized for taking an active part, or in any way promoting the welfare of this Association, and to prevent all other encroachments upon the rights of the members." The district board of directors has "power to authorize any number of members to strike or cease work;" to "equalize and diminish the labours of the members;" to "send a deputation to the conference of any trades' union or elsewhere when deemed advisable." At the time of authorizing a strike, they are to "lay on an additional levy," on all the members to the amount of "one-fourth of the expenses of the strike for the first three months, and one-half of the expenses for the second three months, and so on afterwards." No colliery or lodge is to be "allowed to strike or cease work except to prevent a reduction of wages," until it has been three months in union with the Association. In the case of an authorized strike, 7*s.* a week are to be paid to every man on strike, and 1*s.* per week to every child under ten. Any colliery or lodge striking or ceasing work without the consent of the district meeting is to receive no pay from the funds of the Association during the strike.

The "United Trades' Association of Miners, Salt-makers, and Boatmen of Lancashire and Cheshire," the rules of which were passed June 6th, 1859, as lying out of the districts forming the subject of this report, deserves mention only as one of the most curious results of the strike and lock-out, through the tendency to organization which it developed in the whole of the mining class. The "boatmen," I am bound to say, have since withdrawn from the Association.

The rules of the "Miners' Association, Barnsley District," were revised February 13th, 1860. The objects of the Society are "the securing a proper remuneration for labour, and providing an allowance on the death of its members;" it is governed by "local lodges and delegate meetings," and includes both coal and iron-stone miners. The members are divided into a first and second class, the former paying 6*d.* the latter 3*d.* per week as contribution. 9*d.* per fortnight of the first class, 4½*d.* of the second class, together with the

whole of the levies, and three-fourths of the entrance fees, "constitute a labour-defence and funeral fund," applied "to liquidate all expenses arising from lock-outs and strikes, to the support of victims, paying delegates' wages, and all other general and local necessary expenses." No member is to be "eligible to receive relief as a victim" until returned as such "by a legal meeting of his own lodge." "No document or other agreement in writing" is to be presented "to employers or their agents" till duly examined. No lodge is to strike or leave employment without the sanction of the delegate meeting, which fixes "the allowance to lock-outs or members on strike." One-fourth of entrance fees, and 3*d.* a fortnight per full member, and 1½*d.* a fortnight per half-member, form "an accident fund," for paying a weekly allowance to all members "incapacitated from following their employment from any accident while at work in or about any colliery or iron-stone mine;" but no member is to be "allowed to contribute to the accident fund who is not a member of the labour fund." The death allowance is £8 for a member of the first class, and £4 for one of the second. "Special rules, adapted to the peculiar circumstances of each colliery, must be drawn up by every lodge, such special rules to be in strict conformity with the general rules."

The rules last referred to resemble in great measure those of the projected general "Miners' Association." *

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* By the kindness of the secretary, Mr. Mitchell, I have been supplied with fortnightly balance-sheets, and minutes of delegate meetings of this District Association, which are most valuable as exhibiting the working of a trade society. The balance-sheet for the fortnight ending May 7th, 1860, shows an income of £253 8*s.* 6*d.*, contributed by 4,022 members, making, with a balance of £29 2*s.* 11*d.*, a total of £282 11*s.* 5*d.* The expenditure for the fortnight amounts to £183 19*s.* 11*d.*, leaving a balance to credit of £98 11*s.* 6*d.* Of the expenditure, all but £19 17*s.* 3*d.* goes "to victims." Their claims are thus described:—

No. 1. (Receiving in all £10 12*s.*) "have been turned from their work for being active in the cause, *i.e.* acting as delegates, local secretaries, taking the chair at meetings, &c."

No. 2. (Receiving £58 17*s.* 6*d.*) "are on strike for an advance of wages given by our neighbours. These coals have advanced 20 per cent. since September. (See the *Times*.) The men could get work elsewhere if they could have a proper clearance paper." . . .

No. 3. (Receiving £60 12*s.* 0*d.*) "have been locked out, and can get no clearance papers of any kind; so there is no work to be had."

No. 4. (Receiving £28 3*s.* 8*d.*) "are locked out also," &c.

In the balance-sheet for the fortnight ending June 4th, 1860, the income falls short of the expenditure. The contributions (£145 17*s.* 11½*d.*) with the money in hand (£92 0*s.*7½*d.*) amount only to £237 18*s.* 7*d.*, while the expenditure is £180 0*s.* 2½*d.*, leaving the balance diminished to £57 18*s.* 4½*d.*

The following is a copy of the minutes of the delegate meeting of May 7th, 1860 (omitting proper names).

"1. Minutes of last meeting confirmed.

"2. —— (Colliery) to be supported by the Board.

"3. In the event of any strike or lock-out, any member or members who may, at the time of such strike or lock-out, be in receipt of accident benefit, shall have no claim on the labour fund until such time as he may be fit to follow his usual employment.

"4. Vote taken on the —— question; decided against the men by a majority of twenty-four to twelve.

Apart from the question of wages, the chief economic ground of contention between the coal-owners and their men appears to be the limitation of the hours of labour. On this point, I cannot but call attention to the somewhat startling statement of the general secretary to the Masters' Association, in the answers by him to the questions put forth by this Committee, that a limitation of hours will rather increase than diminish production. He alleges, as "a fact that cannot be disputed, that the production, under the 'eight hours'' system that has been introduced into the South Yorkshire District this last twelve months, at some of the largest collieries, is greatly in excess of what was ever produced by an equal number of men when the men worked twelve or thirteen hours." He assigns, as the principal reason for this, "that the young, thoughtless and improvident, as a general rule, have two or three days' spreeing and drinking—what they call pleasure"—during the early part of their "pay" (time of employment), because "they know that they will have the opportunity of working all the hours God sends [in] the latter part, to fetch up their lost time." Under the eight hours' system, he continues, "this class are compelled to work regularly, so that the pits would not be thrown idle one, and partly idle one or two days in each pay," but the miners, day-men, and machinery, would have constant and steady employment. Our friend the Employer seems inclined to take the same view, provided the men would work regularly the eight hours.

That a limitation of the hours of labour might tend to render the production of coal more steady may be conceded. But it is not of course to be denied, that the general tendency of the men's regulations, practices, demands, is, as it always must be, to restrict production. On the general question of the effects of such a restriction, it

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"5. A——, B——, C——, D——, E——, F——, G——, to be paid from the victim fund.

"6. A committee of five to be appointed to consider and report to the next meeting on the best means of preventing the making of victims.

"7. G——, C——, I——, K——, and L——, be the above committee.

"8. This meeting is of opinion, that the presence of Mr. S—— and Mr. T—— in London is essential; and that each district should pay its proper quota of expenses in proportion to numbers.

"9. That the disparity of numbers be taken into consideration in calculating the proper sum that each district shall pay towards the expenses of Mr. S—— and Mr. T—— now in London.

"10. That our secretary go to see Mr. ——, Manager of —— Collieries, with a view of sending a portion of our men there.

"11. A copy of the rules to be forwarded to —— Colliery, and they be admitted according to rule.

"12. 5*s.* to be given to Mr. ——, as a portion of his expenses.

"13. 9*d.* per member to be brought to the next delegate meeting.

"The secretary begs to direct the attention of the lodges to rule 24 (new rules), and hopes for a better compliance with its provisions for the future in reference to victims. Good steady workmen can have constant employment at ——, and houses found. The expenses of removing families and effects paid by the proprietors. There is no strike at the works, and some of the men told me that 'twenty or thirty of our Barnsley chaps' would do no harm, but a deal of good amongst them.

"(Signed) ——."

would be quite out of place for me to enter. But it should not be overlooked, that coal-mining belongs to a peculiar category of employments, those which consist in the extraction of practically unrenewable wealth. Without entering into any calculation as to the rate of exhaustion of our supply of native coal, yet, at a time when we have bound ourselves to allow the freest access to our coal-fields to a neighbour whom, in the same breath, we accuse of unsettling the peace of Europe, it may well be doubted whether, in this instance more than in any other, the public interest does not command us to allow the freest scope to those comparatively trifling checks upon the too rapid destruction of this necessary of our industrial and military life, which the private interest of the miner—no doubt sometimes to the inconvenience of his employers—prompts him to establish.

VII. *Summary.*

If we sum up the results of this narrative, we shall find them, I think, to be as follows :—

1. Coal-mining in West Yorkshire has been sought to be regulated, on the part of the masters, by an Employers' Association which has existed for the last thirty years; but on the part of the men, by no distinct organization till the year 1853.

2. In that year, at or about the time of a rise in the price of coal, successive advances of wages were or had to be given, amounting, on the masters' showing, to 30 per cent. where the rise in prices amounted to 45 per cent., or, according to a more probable calculation, to 62½ per cent.

3. Without any formal organization, the men met the rise in prices by a restriction on the earnings of individuals.

4. There being no restraint on the admission of strangers, and the trade itself being in some of its branches almost an unskilled one, the void thus produced was filled up by labourers from other employments.

5. Intense competition among masters, and the violation by them of the rules of their own association, at first underhand, and then openly, led, in spite of the check upon production sought to be exercised by the men, to over-supply and a fall in price.

6. A portion of the masters sought to meet this, as early as 1855, by a considerable reduction of wages, which, however, did not succeed except in the Gildersome district.

7. The fall in prices having attained to a crisis in 1858, the Masters' Association sought to effect a simultaneous reduction of wages, to the extent of 15 per cent., supporting it by a resolution of mutual help in case of strikes,—Gildersome district, on the contrary, it is said, now *advancing* wages.

8. To resist this reduction, was formed a Miners' Association, at first local in West Yorkshire, and partial strikes were organized against individual masters, the men on strike being maintained by those at work ; the Masters' Association in like manner supporting the masters struck against.

9. These partial strikes having lasted for some months, the Mas-

ters' Association decided on a general "lock-out," or closing of all the pits, in case the men should not accept the 15 per cent. reduction, submit to all colliery regulations, and break up their Union.

10. The terms were not acceded to by the men. Attempts to bring about an accommodation, made by clergymen, magistrates, merchants, and willingly received by the men, were rejected by the Masters' Association.

11. The Men's Association was now sought to be enlarged so as to embrace the whole of the United Kingdom.

12. Eventually, a proposal to resume work at 7½ per cent. reduction on wages, the other demands of the Masters' Association being set aside, was accepted by one employer, and afterwards acceded to by the rest.

13. The whole of the 7½ per cent. reduction thus submitted to has since been recovered; and that while prices were even lower than when the 15 per cent. was sought to be enforced.

14. The results of the strike and of their trade organization are therefore reckoned by the men to be a victory over the employers on all points.

15. Both the masters' and the men's associations remain on foot. The latter, although they have failed to realize that general organization which was attempted, yet, from the mere support of a strike, have risen to the consideration and agitation of the largest questions affecting the miners' calling throughout the country; hours of labour, education of children, ventilation, inspection, special training of managers, apprenticeship.

To the Honourable the House of Commons of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

The Humble Petition of the undersigned Workers in the Coal and Iron-stone Mines of Great Britain,

Sheweth,

That your Petitioners are deeply sensible of the benefits which have resulted from the statutes passed by your Honourable House for the Inspection of Coal Mines, and for the prohibition of females and young persons under the age of ten years from working in Coal Mines, and are anxious that the same may be extended to iron-stone mines.

That as the present Act for the Inspection of Coal Mines will expire in the Session ending 1860, your Petitioners humbly submit that it would be for the benefit of the Mining population to increase the number of inspectors, and also to appoint a sufficient number of sub-inspectors, to meet the great increase in mining operations, and to add to their powers under the next enactment, in order to lessen the numerous accidents that from time to time occur in mines.

That it would be beneficial to give the power of laying criminal information, or any other powers that may seem meet to your Honourable House to promote efficiency; and also, the training

schools be established for the purpose of educating miners, so that they may become skilled and competent to undertake the management of mines.

That your Petitioners humbly submit, that your Honourable House consider the propriety of prohibiting the employment of females on the banks or pit heads of mines.

That your Petitioners humbly submit, that the practice of employing boys in mines from the age of ten to fourteen years, for more than eight hours per day, does not afford sufficient opportunity for obtaining an adequate amount of education, and is also the main cause of the low social condition of the miners in general.

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly pray that some provisions may be introduced into the next Bill for the education of the young employed in mines from the age of ten to fourteen years.

Your Petitioners also humbly pray, that a clause may be inserted in the new Act, providing for a fair system of weighing the miners' material on the pit bank, and thereby put a stop to the constant disputes that, from this cause, too often occur between employers and employed.

And your Petitioners, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

The Operative Coal Miners of England and Scotland, to the Honourable Members of the Commons House of Parliament, beg most respectfully to represent—

That, by the census of 1851, the numbers engaged in Coal Mining were 220,000 ; since which there has been a very large increase in that employment.

That the operation of Coal Mining, *as now conducted*, is seriously detrimental to the life and health of those employed in it, so that while, according to the Registrar-General's return, the average life of the whole community reaches 33.4 years, that of the collier is only 27.

There are two causes directly operating to produce this fatal result :—1st, accidents, from which, "for the last eight years, the average has been 1,015 yearly, or four to the thousand—eight or ten times above the general average of deaths by violence from dangerous occupations" [see paper on the "Loss of Life in Coal Mines," by F. H. Holland, Esq., vol. iii. page 184, Transactions of the Association of Social Science] ; and 2nd, the injurious and unhealthy nature of the employment itself. Radcliff's tables of the amount of sickness throughout Great Britain shows that the average sickness from 21 to 60 years is but 25 weeks, while that of Coal Miners average 97 weeks, or 67 per cent. more than the general average, during the same period.

That though it is not likely accidents can be entirely avoided—or even the general average of life and health obtained in mining operations,—yet, by proper arrangements of machinery and other appliances, and working, and by scientific and efficient operation of ventilation and management, at least one-half of all accidents might be entirely avoided ; the health of all engaged might be greatly improved ; and most of the lives, so valuable and important, definitely prolonged.

The opinion here expressed will commend itself at once to all who know the nature of mining, and the defective and unscientific modes of working common in many places. This is not, however, a matter of opinion, for in the paper by Mr. Holland, before alluded to, it is shown that in Northumberland and Durham (where one-fourth of the coal is raised, and one-fifth of the miners employed), a better system of management is carried out than elsewhere—the machinery is better planned, and the ventilation more efficient—and the result is, that "out of a total of 248 deaths from explosion, per annum, the north has only 21; and, therefore, if the average loss of life was reduced by equal care, it might, by the average of the north, be that the 1,984 killed during the last eight years would have been only 845; that is to say, 1,139 lives have been needlessly thrown away, and 142 might be annually saved by the precautions now used in one district, in explosions alone." The same results apply still more strongly to the deaths from falling-in of the roofs; from accidents in shafts, &c. [Space alone preventing the illustrations, see page 736, vol. iii., Social Science Transactions; and also a paper read before the Society of Arts by the same gentleman.] The deleterious influence upon health, in the unanimous opinion of all medical men, consists in the effect of working in a confined, hot, dusty, and unhealthy gaseous atmosphere; in the excessive labour necessary; and in the long hours of working. These soon wear out the strongest men, and induce the sickness and mortality previously named. That the hard labour can be greatly altered, is not at present probable; but the time of working can be altered, and consequently the evil effect may be reduced, to great advantage. In proof of this opinion, see the paper "On the physical effects of diminished labour," by Robert Baker, Esq., Factory Inspector [page 553, 3rd vol. of Social Science Transactions] while all scientific and medical men agree that a proper system of ventilation would not only prevent explosions, but would greatly tend to promote health, and strengthen and prolong life, in the young and adult operatives thus engaged.

That the present Inspection Act of Mines was brought into operation in 1855, and will expire this 1860; its object being the preservation of the lives, and improvement in the condition of the miners in general; but that the conditions, mechanical and sanitary, now required by law, are very unequally and inefficiently enforced; and that the results are injurious and unsatisfactory accordingly.

The Act passed in 1852, for the "Inspection of Mines," has proved beneficial and highly satisfactory, so far as it has been carried out. This is proved by the unanimous testimony of all the *workmen* engaged; but that it is not worked efficiently, or that it is not properly planned, may be judged by the great differences of results in different localities, even where the conditions of danger are not naturally so imminent—as in Durham and the North. In Yorkshire, the average of deaths from accident has been 86·4 during the last eight years (varying from 47 to 245)—a much larger proportion than is proved to be necessary in the case of the North. While the average of lives of miners in England is 27 years, and in some places much lower, at Rothwell it only reaches 21. At Ince, in the Wigan Union, Lancashire (for five years, by the Registrar's report), it was but 17 years. The case of Ince being exceptional from explosion, that of Rothwell, near Leeds, in Yorkshire, is worthy of attention. There was no serious accidents or explosions occurring; and two other (chiefly agricultural) villages, within two miles, reached an average of better than 30 years at death during the same period. [See Almanack of Social Science, 1860.] The fatality here indicated, doubtless results from want of proper arrangements and consequent habits in the pits; to secure which, there is either not a proper system of working laid down, or it is clearly not carried out. Experienced persons say that both is the case, viz.: That the Inspection Act is defective in regulations and powers to carry out; and the Inspectors are not sufficient in number to be able to perform the duty properly, if inclined.

The operative miners engaged in this hazardous, hard, but neces-

sary mode of employment, are fully conscious of the evils they suffer; and believing that it is in the power of Parliament, by general regulation, to ameliorate much of the evils they endure, have most earnestly to suggest, in the renewal of the Inspection Act, that better provisions may be made for the attainment of these most desirable and humane objects.

1. For arranging, checking, and inspecting the mechanical working in shafts and mines.

2. For providing and securing a continuous and efficient system of ventilation. And

3. For limiting the average working of coal-mines to eight hours per day, to all employed under fourteen years of age.

Besides the natural evils before instanced, for the remedying of which the above regulations are solicited, miners have to contend with several conventional arrangements, which, as now worked, are seriously detrimental to their physical and moral well-being.

There is no legal or regulated system of weighing or measuring work done. Colliers are paid by measure, which, at the pleasure of the masters or their agents, is often checked or forfeited upon most frivolous pretences; and thus the operatives are defrauded of thousands of pounds annually.

In many instances, the system of truck in goods and drink is worked by stewards and butties, so that the operative has to pay high prices for inferior articles; and is induced and compelled to drink, or to lose work and wage, to the moral and social detriment of themselves and families.

The employers have latterly established codes of bye-laws of a most arbitrary, oppressive, and unjust nature, which they carry out at pleasure, by heavy fines or imprisonment; and in many cases, being magistrates, they sit upon the bench and adjudicate in their own questions and interests.

These growing evils, seriously injurious to the operative miner, tend to produce disaffection and unsettled habits: and, by promoting and engendering ill-will, they give rise to contentions and strikes, and many other evils, detrimental to all concerned and the public weal. It is, therefore, most respectfully submitted:—

4. That no code of bye-laws shall be legal which are not framed on equitable and mutual principles—whether relating to fines or regulations, betwixt masters and men.

5. That laws relating to the truck system be strengthened and enforced by the Inspectors—workmen having the power to inform.

6. That a fair and equitable system of weighing and measuring mining works be instituted by law, subject to fines for breach, and placed under inspection.

7. For increased power to punish breaches of these regulations by penal powers, whether against principals or subordinates, as well as of fining (in such degree as may constitute ample punishment) for neglect.

8. For systemising and increasing the means of inspection, so as to obtain efficient operation. And, lastly,—

9. As all experience has proved that no permanent improvement can be achieved without a corresponding advance in knowledge, intelligence, and habits, the operative miners, above all, desire that a good sound system of intellectual, social, and moral education may be provided for their children and youth of both sexes, to be carried out

upon the *principles* of the Factories Act Education Clauses, or in such way as may secure to the rising generation the knowledge felt by them to be so essential to all future social progression.

Believing that these things can be sooner, better, more economically, and peacefully carried out and secured by public legislation, than by private enterprise, or by individual or local contention; knowing, in fact, that however many good and humane employers would be willing to effect the measures desirable, that the selfish, ignorant, and indisposed would negative any such intentions; and believing that the end to be attained would not only justify the means, but amply —in order, peace, and economy—repay all necessary expenditure; and that general good and public advantage would extensively result [See Mr. Holland's paper throughout]: we most earnestly and respectfully direct the attention of Members of our Honourable Legislature to these facts and suggestions, with a view of securing a good, sound, and lasting measure of law, in the renewed Inspection Act; so would the blessings of thousands of hard-working miners be showered upon their friends, and the future generations would admire the wisdom and humanity of those who would secure and promote health, longevity, and the means of happiness, to the operative miners of Great Britain.

(*Signed by order of the Miners' Deputation*)
ALLEN TETLOW, *Chairman.*
RICHARD MITCHELL, *Secretary.*

6, Agar Street, Strand, Feb. 22, 1860.

ACCOUNT OF THE STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT

IN THE

BUILDING TRADES OF LONDON,

IN 1859-60.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

BY

G. SHAW LEFEVRE AND THOMAS R. BENNET.

BEFORE proceeding to give a detailed account of the Strike and Lock-out in the Building Trades of London, of 1859-60, it will be well shortly to describe the condition of the trade previous to the breaking out of the Strike, and the relative positions of the masters and their workmen.

Under the term Building Trades are generally included the four principal trades,—bricklayers, masons, plasterers, carpenters, and joiners; and the five subordinate trades,—smiths, slaters, painters, plumbers, and glaziers. These subordinate trades are, however, only considered as part of the building trades when they are carried on in connexion with one or more of the former.

There are about 550 Masters in London, of whom not more than 100 carry on the four principal and some one or more of the subordinate trades; the remainder are ready to take a contract to do all the work in any building; they employ mechanics and labourers themselves for the four principal trades, and sub-let the rest of the work. These 450 masters are said to employ an average of 20 men. Of the remaining masters—

Fifty	employ	100	men	= 5,000
Twenty-five	„	200	„	= 5,000
Ten	„	300	„	= 3,000
Eight	„	500	„	= 4,000
Four	„	700	„	= 2,800
Six	„	1,500	„	= 9,000
				28,800;

which, added to the 9,000 employed by the other 450 masters, make in round numbers 38,000 as the number of workmen in the trade.

It must be noticed, however, that there are very large numbers of men carrying on the subordinate branches of trade, and employing limited numbers of workmen.

The workmen are divided into skilled and unskilled, or labourers.

The last number about 12,000, and are in receipt of wages from 18*s.* to 21*s.* per week. They are generally members of benefit societies registered under the Friendly Societies Act, but are not combined or organized in distinct trade societies or unions.

Of the skilled workmen, the masons in London number from 800 to 1,000, of whom about 500 belong to a trade society, organized throughout the country, and acting under a central authority.

The bricklayers number about 5,000, and of these 3,000 are members of the bricklayers' trade union, which is confined to the metropolis.

The carpenters and joiners are in number about 13,000, of whom 7,000 are said to be members of different trade societies, which at the present time are about forty in number, but are gradually being absorbed into one central union.

The plasterers are 4,000 in number, 2,000 of whom are members of a trade society, which has branches throughout the country.

The remaining skilled workmen are divided amongst the other five trades, of whom the smiths, plumbers and painters have each their distinct trades' unions.

In all these trades the skilled workmen were in receipt of 5*s.* 6*d.* for a day of ten hours, with a cessation of work on Saturday at four o'clock, though receiving full pay for that day.

The Master Builders' Society was founded in the year 1834, for mutual defence, and for the interchange of useful information; but previous to the outbreak of the Strike in 1859, it consisted of but few members.

The agitation which led indirectly to the strike commenced nearly seven years ago.

In the spring of 1853 a movement was begun by the masons to shorten the hours of labour. At that time their wages were 5*s.* a day. The carpenters and joiners took part with them in the movement, but as they preferred receiving an increase of wages, the movement was abandoned on the masters giving an extra 6*d.* a day.

In the autumn of 1857 the question was again opened, and the carpenters and joiners appointed delegates from about fifty different establishments, and on June 3rd, 1858, they held an aggregate meeting in Exeter Hall, when the following memorial was drawn up and presented to the Master Builders' Society.

"*To the Master Builders and Employers of Carpenters and Joiners of London and its Vicinity.*

"GENTLEMEN,—At an aggregate meeting of the trade, held in Exeter Hall, on June 3rd, 1858, it was unanimously resolved that a memorial should be presented to you, asking you to reduce the hours of labour from ten to nine hours per day, *with the present rate of wages.*

"The reason why we ask this of you is, we believe the time has come when there must be a better equalization of the hours of labour, in consequence of the great increase both of population and machi-

nery; we are not opposed to machinery, but we are of opinion that the working classes ought to reap some benefit from its extensive introduction, and the benefit we wish is a mitigation of the hours of labour.

"We also think that reducing our labour one hour per day would be a great boon to society in general, and would have a beneficial tendency to those employed in promoting their *moral and social* condition.

"Gentlemen, the object of this memorial is to respectfully request you to concede to us the privilege of working nine hours per day, instead of ten (as at present). We wish this alteration to take place without any diminution in the present rate of wages; should you grant us this boon, it will produce and promote a better feeling between employer and employed, for long hours of labour are detrimental to both. Hoping you will consider this question as employers of labour belonging to a great country which is held up as a model for the admiration of the world,

"We are, Gentlemen,

"Yours respectfully, on behalf of the Trade Delegates,

"THE COMMITTEE.

"GEORGE POTTER, *Secretary.*"

On the 26th of August the masters received a deputation from the carpenters and joiners at the Freemasons' Tavern. There were present on that occasion twelve of the largest employers in London, and nine operatives. The operatives having stated their case, withdrew, and the masters then passed the following resolutions.

"That the question, although raised by the carpenters and joiners, is really a question involving all trades.

"That inasmuch as there is no compulsion by which workmen are obliged to labour for a given number of hours, it really amounts to an alteration in the rate of wages.

"That within the last four or five years the price of skilled labour has been advanced ten per cent., and that it does not appear to this meeting that there is anything in the circumstances of the present times to warrant a further increase to the extent suggested.

"That looking at the very large amount of the interests involved, not only as regards the building trades, but obviously even beyond these bounds, this meeting does not feel that they can accede to the request made, and they come to this resolution with the best possible feeling of good-will to the workmen; and they are bound to say, that the manner in which this question has been brought forward and discussed is very creditable to those who have appeared as its advocates."

Copies of these resolutions were given to the deputation.

In the mean time the masons had begun again to agitate, but this time they asked for the Saturday half-holiday. They made a request for this on the 1st of June, 1858, but on the refusal of the masters they gave it up, and joined with the carpenters and joiners in the nine hours' movement. The two trades jointly sent a delegate to

the bricklayers, and the result was, that a Conference met in September, consisting of seven members of each of the three trades.

This Conference drew up a memorial, which was signed by the Chairman and Secretary of each of these three trades, and presented to the masters on the 18th of November.

"*To the Master Builders of London and its Vicinity.*

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the operative carpenters and joiners, stone masons and bricklayers, beg to lay before you this memorial, praying for a reduction in the hours of labour.

"From daily experience in our avocations, we are convinced that owing to excessive hours of labour our worth as artisans is depreciated, both in a mental and physical point of view.

"We justify ourselves in taking this position on the ground of our having an equal right to share with other workers that large amount of public sympathy which is being now so widely extended in the direction of shortening the hours of labour.

"The fact is well known that the present hours are too many to afford either rest from exhaustion or time to improve the intellect, so as to acquire the knowledge and skill requisite for the rapid progress of invention; that continuous exertion without recreation must engender those evils we deplore; that owing to this continuous exertion, premature incapability must necessarily ensue, whereby our value in the field of labour is materially affected, and we ourselves are eventually left a heavy burden upon the public.

"Further, Gentlemen, your memorialists regard this question as a purely public one: a question which does not in the remotest degree affect the employers' profits, other than as it has a tendency to increase them; and the public, benefiting as it does by the introduction of machinery, will not, we feel assured, deny to us under your sanction a like participation.

"The object we are desirous of attaining by this memorial is, a concession from our employers of one hour per day, *and the present rate of wages to continue;* by such a concession you will relieve your memorialists from the evils they at present suffer, and yourselves from those future evils consequent upon our own.

"We beg leave also to suggest, that the employers will do well to have regard in all future contracts to the *nine hours per day*, for we are so sanguine as to consider the consummation of our desire inevitable.

"Trusting, Gentlemen, that our memorial will receive that consideration which is due to our wants, is the wish of yours respectfully, the carpenters and joiners, stone masons and bricklayers.

"Signed on behalf of the Trade Committees:—

"*Carpenters and Joiners* .	MATTHEW BENN, *Chairman.* GEORGE POTTER, *Secretary.*
"*Stone Masons*	EDWIN DANIEL, *Chairman.* R. W. GREY, *Secretary.*
"*Bricklayers*	WILLIAM BLACKBURN, *Chairman.* HENRY TURFF, *Secretary.*"

A copy of this memorial was sent to every master builder in London.

The Builders' Society again met, and after consideration, agreed in reply to refer the memorialists to the above resolutions of the 26th of August.

About a month after this, the painters and plasterers joined in the movement, making altogether five trades, all of whom were thenceforward represented each by seven members at the Conference.

Another application was then made to the masters, to know if they would receive a deputation from the five United Building Trades. The answer to that was sent in a letter dated December 10th, 1858, which stated that the masters adhered to their former resolutions on the subject, and considered that no new facts or statements had been brought forward which had not been thoroughly argued in the preceding August, and they declined to receive a deputation.

On the 26th of January, 1859, the building trade held another meeting in Exeter Hall, and a resolution was passed to ask for a definite answer from the masters.

On the 19th of March the following letter was sent to the master builders.

"*To the Members of the Master Builders' Society.*

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the Conference of the Building Trades, amalgamated for the purpose of attaining the nine hours per day, deem it expedient once more to communicate with you on the issue in question. You are doubtless fully aware of the whole of our proceedings since we last addressed you, and these proceedings we are convinced cannot fail to have their due weight with yourselves. Supported as our cause is by the public press, acknowledged favourably by the Association of Architects, advocated from the pulpit, and our own energetic and persevering efforts, it cannot fail to call for your entire approval.

"Your resolutions submitted to us do not express any thing definite; but to enter into debate on this question by letter would be next to impossible, and is not our intention.

"This much we may be allowed to say, that we consider this movement has been agitated long enough to entitle us to claim either your sanction or rejection.

"And not doubting that it has been discussed in your Association, we respectfully request an answer from your meeting, whether you will consider the nine hours as a day's work. Yes or no.

"I have the honour to be, on behalf of the Conference,

"Yours most respectfully,

"GEORGE POTTER, *Secretary.*

"19*th March*, 1859."

An answer to this was returned, that a meeting of the Metropolitan Builders would be convened by the masters to consider the subject.

This meeting was held on the 20th of April, and attended by about seventy masters, including those who were, as well as those who were not, members of the Association.

The following resolutions were passed unanimously.

"Moved by Mr. Charles Lucas, and seconded by Mr. Myers:—

"That in the opinion of this meeting it is not expedient to accede to the request of the workmen contained in their letter of the 19th March, because the present arrangement of hours is the most convenient to all parties, and does not involve such an amount of time as to bring the building workmen at all within the limit of those on whose behalf the public interest has been excited, and its benevolence aroused (the hours being from six in the morning to half-past five in the afternoon, with one hour and a half interval for meals); and because much public inconvenience would result from the discontinuance of work at so early an hour as half-past four, involving, as it would do, the stoppage of all machinery, plant, and cattle, at an early hour.

"Moved by Mr. Dunmage (of the firm of W. Cubitt and Co.), and seconded by Mr. Kelk:—

"That if the builders were to admit the principle sought for by the workmen, they would take upon themselves the responsibility of taxing the public more than 10 per cent., and establish a regulation which must necessarily govern labour and its value with all other trades throughout the country; that, acting upon this impression, this meeting records its opinion that there is no sufficient reason at this time to justify such an advance as is demanded by what is called the nine hours' movement. During the past few years the desire of the master builders to meet every reasonable demand has been evinced by the fact that they have given up, without reduction of wages, one hour and a half on each Saturday afternoon, and so lately as the year 1853 they agreed to an advance of 10 per cent. on the wages then paid, by reason of which the skilled workman on an average now receives 33*s.* for 58½ hours' labour.

"That for these reasons, amongst others, it is the opinion of this meeting that the request for nine hours, to be paid for as ten hours, ought not to be acceded to."

About this time the labourers of the various building trades joined the Conference, and seven of their body were appointed delegates, making up the number of the Conference to forty-two.

On the 11th of May another meeting of the building trade was held in Exeter Hall, and the Conference were again instructed to communicate with the master builders. On the 26th of May the following ultimatum was sent by Mr. Potter on their account.

"AN ULTIMATUM.

"*To the Members of the Master Builders' Association.*

"GENTLEMEN,—At a large meeting of the Building Trades held in Exeter Hall on the 18th instant, your resolutions were discussed, and after deep consideration we were unable to see that you have definitely answered our letter of March 19th, and we are unwilling to believe that

you seriously entertain the intention of taking on yourselves the responsibility of causing the public disaster which was threatened by several of your body at your meeting on the 20th April.

"We therefore, being influenced by the most friendly feelings, once more appeal to you to consider our claim, and we respectfully request a decisive answer from your meeting on the 9th June next, *whether you will concede the nine hours as a day's work.*

"I remain, Gentlemen yours respectfully,

"On behalf of the United Trades,

"GEO. POTTER, *Secretary.*"

The following reply was sent by the order of the Builders' Society.

"*June 10th*, 1859.

"SIR,—Your letter of the 26th May was laid before the Builders' Society yesterday, and I am desired to remind you, that when you addressed to this Society your letter of 19th March, the Society felt that the question was too important to be dealt with by them, and it was therefore determined to convene a meeting of the Builders of the Metropolis. This meeting was held on the 20th April. Your letter was submitted to the consideration of *that* meeting, and the resolutions *then* unanimously passed were forwarded to you in due course —that it appears to this Society, that the concluding paragraph of *those resolutions does very distinctly* answer the request contained in your letter of the 19th March, and repeated in that of the 26th May.

"I am desired further to say that no '*threat*' has been held out, and should any such '*public disaster*' occur, as that to which you allude, the responsibility must rest with those who may occasion it.

"I am, Sir, yours obediently,

"GEO. WALES, *Secretary to Builders' Society.*

"To Mr. Geo. Potter."

The Conference then consulted their respective trades, to whom they put two questions :—

1. Whether the question should be postponed.
2. Whether it should be mooted that autumn.

A majority decided in favour of an immediate attempt to obtain the nine hours, and it was determined to send a memorial to five firms, viz.: Messrs. Trollope, Downes, Brown and Robinson, M'Clelland and Bird, and Holland and Allen—whose names were selected by chance out of a hat. Of these, three only were members of the Masters' Association. The list was afterwards reduced to four firms, by striking out Messrs. Holland and Allen, with whom it was thought not advisable to interfere, as they were involved at the time in a strike with their bricklayers. A deputation from the Conference met the workmen of these four firms, and aided them in drawing up memorials to their respective masters. These were as follows.

"GENTLEMEN,—We, the men in your employ, consider that the time has arrived when some alteration in the hours of labour is necessary; and having determined that the reduction of the present

working day to nine hours, at the present rate of wages, asked for by the building trades during a public agitation of eighteen months, would meet our present requirements, we respectfully solicit you to concede the nine hours as a day's work. A definite answer to our request is solicited by the 23rd day of July, 1859."

The memorials were presented to these four firms by one of each of the building trades. Amongst those who presented it to Messrs. Trollope, was a mason named Joseph Pacey. Whether he delivered it to Messrs. Trollope personally, or left it for them at their place of business, is a matter of dispute between the masters and the men.

Messrs. Trollope say it was given them by a clerk; the men allege that the deputation presented it. Both agree that Messrs. Trollope received it on the 16th of July. On the 20th of July, Joseph Pacey was discharged, in consequence, it is asserted by the men, of his having formed one of the deputation. Messrs. Trollope admit the discharge, but assign neglect of work as the reason for it.

In the memorial to Messrs. Trollope, the men required a definite answer to their memorial by the 23rd of July, but on the 21st, before that time expired, the masons in Messrs. Trollopes' employ struck in consequence of the discharge of Pacey On the 22nd, the Conference met, approved the proceedings of the masons, and determined that all the men at Trollopes' should be called out.

It appears that it was not originally intended by the Conference to commence the strike at Messrs. Trollopes', but to select by ballot at which of the four firms it should commence, but this intention was frustrated by the events just narrated.

The Conference then circulated the following notice :—

"NINE HOURS' MOVEMENT.

"*Important Notice to the Operatives of the Building Trade.*

"The Master Builders having refused to concede the nine hours as a day's work, the Conference of the United Building Trades have been directed by the members of the movement to call upon a firm to cease work; having done so, they now appeal to you to aid them in supporting the men now on strike at Messrs. Trollopes'. It is earnestly hoped that no workmen will go in to supplant them till they have gained their object. It is expected that every man will do his duty.

"By order of the Executive,
"GEORGE POTTER, *Secretary*."

The strike having thus commenced, a public meeting of the Metropolitan Builders was convened on the 27th of July, at the Freemasons' Tavern, at which nearly two hundred of the principal members of the London Building Trade attended. The following letter was presented at the meeting :—

"PAVIORS' ARMS, WESTMINSTER, *July 27th*, 1859.

"SIR,—As a meeting of the Master Builders of the metropolis is convened for to-day, to consider the question of the nine hours, I

think it right that they should be informed why the firm of Messrs. Trollope and Sons was the first firm selected for the men to cease work; the reason being that one of the deputation presenting the memorial was discharged on Wednesday last at a quarter past five. This so irritated the men working at that job, that they ceased work the next day, without consulting the Conference of the nine hours' movement. When the Conference met on the following Friday, to settle which should be the firm selected, the members felt so insulted at Messrs. Trollopes' conduct, that it was decided by a very large majority, that the remainder of the men should be called out for the nine hours per day. You are respectfully requested to read this at the meeting of the Master Builders this day.

"I remain, on behalf of the United Trades,

"GEORGE POTTER, *Secretary.*

"Mr. Wales, Secretary of the Builders' Society."

Complaints were then made by the members of the trade, of the tyranny and dictation of the Trades' Unions, and a firm determination was announced to liberate the trade from the thraldom with which it was threatened by a strike which, it was felt, was intended to take every employer in detail, after Messrs. Trollope had been prostrated in the struggle.

After much discussion, it was resolved, "That the metropolitan builders are compelled to close their establishments on the 6th of August; but taking into consideration the great number of men who wholly discountenance the Conference, a Committee of twenty be appointed to consider the best means of opening the doors to such men as may be willing to come to work, independent of, and not subject to, the dictation of any society interfering with the labour of the working man."

A Committee was then appointed, which at an adjourned meeting, held on the 1st of August, presented the following report.

"Your Committee consider it desirable to preface a report of their proceedings by a brief record of the origin and causes of their constitution.

"A large proportion of operatives connected with the building trade have been associated in various societies, primarily for the purpose of making mutual provision for the ordinary vicissitudes incident to their position. Provident co-operation for the attainment of some security against the many fortuities to which their condition is liable, is not merely unobjectionable, but laudable; and is at all events solely their own concern, with which the rest of the community have no right to interfere.

"But these associated bodies have not rested content with the pursuit of these praiseworthy objects. They have taken the opportunity of their union, from time to time to invade the rights of their employers, and control the actions of their fellow-workmen; and by their formidable combination, they have sometimes succeeded in dictating to masters and to men the conditions of service, the terms of employment, even the very mechanical economy of the establishments

connected with their calling. Various ill-considered and pernicious concessions to the turbulent and exacting spirit of these associations have been wrung from the employers and the independent operatives, until union has risen to conspiracy—strength has tempted power to proceed to intimidation, and dictation has been aggravated to the peremptoriness of an intolerable tyranny.

"At last, not contented with this progressive exaction of more wages for less work, the Conference of the united building trades has issued the following announcement." (See p. 60.)

"The reasons which are made the premises of this conclusion are thus stated by the Conference :—

"'We ask a reduction of the working day from ten hours to nine, and the present rate of wages to continue. The applying of machinery to all the pursuits of human industry has, to a great extent, rendered the demand for manual labour unnecessary. In our own particular trade it already rips the material, ploughs, mortises, and tenons, and does everything except the bare putting together; and we are warranted in anticipating further depressive aggressions, and justified in attempting to provide a barrier against future distresses by shortening the hours of labour. We ask for the continuance of the present rate of wages, because, through the uncertainties of employment, they do not afford more than the bare means of subsistence. We seek to abolish systematic overtime. In many of the building firms, it is a common practice for the men employed to work six and a half to seven days a week, summer and winter, busy or otherwise, without the slightest necessity either for trade or public convenience, but merely to satisfy a hungry craving on the part of a few, while thousands of able and willing mechanics are starving in the streets for the want of that food which a part of that labour would supply them with.'

"Although the ultimate design of proceeding to an eight hours' movement is formally disclaimed by the Conference, it follows as a logical sequence from the foregoing statement of reasons for restricting the hours of labour to nine. It is there implied that the benefits to be derived from machinery are not the property of society, of its inventors, of those who apply it, but are to be appropriated by those whose labour it is alleged it will displace; and that no labouring man should be permitted to work a whole day while any other can find employment only for a half. It is a necessary corollary from such premises, that the superior industry of the assiduous workman is to be made the plea for preventing him from labouring at his employment, and that the more the ingenuity of mankind economises labour, the higher are to be the perquisites of the artisan, and the less he ought to be called upon to do.

"It is not, however, with the fallacious political economy upon which this movement is founded that this Committee have now to deal, but with the unjustifiable means by which its promoters seek to enforce it. So long as each employer and each artisan is left at perfect liberty to determine for themselves the mutual conditions of

their engagements, there is no honest ground for the interference of any third party.

"But when by means of Trades' Unions, Conferences, and the simultaneous action of strikes, working men seek to compel their brother operatives and their employers to regulate their mutual agreements solely at the dictation of an irresponsible extraneous body, and to deprive both labour and capital of their undoubted right of independent judgment and entire liberty of action, it is clear that the tyranny of combinations must be resisted by the firmness and unanimity of those who are threatened with the infliction of their mandates. When trades' societies combine, it is essential that, in self-defence, their victims should unite; and your Committee, as a condition precedent to all attempts to grapple with the difficulty relegated to them for solution, regard the immediate establishment, for mutual protection, of an Association of Metropolitan Master Builders as absolutely indispensable.

"Your Committee therefore recommend that the gentlemen present at this and the former meeting do constitute themselves into a society to be called the 'Central Association of Master Builders,' to which any employer of workmen engaged in any business connected with the building trade should be eligible by the votes of a majority of the members present at the meeting at which he is proposed.

"Your Committee further submit that the following (among others) should be adopted as fundamental rules immediately obligatory and binding upon each member:—

"That no member of this Association shall engage, or continue in his employment, any contributor to the funds of any Trades' Union or Trades' Society which practices interference with the regulations of any establishment, the hours or terms of labour, the contracts or agreements of employers or employed, or the qualification or terms of service.

"That no deputations of Trades' Unions, Committees, or other bodies, with reference to any objects refered to in article 3, be received by any member of this Association on any account whatever; it being still perfectly open to any workman, individually, to apply on such subject to his employer, who is recommended to be at all times open and accessible to any personal representation of his individual operatives.

"That no member of this Association shall engage or continue in his employment any workman whomsoever until the person engaging such workman shall have stipulated with and obtained from him his distinct agreement and formal assent to the conditions embraced in the following form of engagement, which shall be read over to every such workman, and a copy whereof shall be handed to him before entering upon his work:—

"'I declare that I am not now, nor will I during the continuance of my engagement with you become, a member of, or support, any society which directly or indirectly interferes with the arrangements of this or any other establishment, or the hours or terms of labour;

and that I recognise the right of employers and employed individually to make any trade engagements on which they may choose to agree.'

"That no member of this Association shall permit dictation interference, or direct or indirect tampering with the management of his establishment, or the engagement, or conditions of the service of his workmen; but that, in the event of a strike or turn-out occurring in the establishment of any member of this Association from reasons or from causes which shall, in the opinion of the executive committee, entitle the employer so assailed to its countenance and support, it is hereby, and shall continue to be distinctly understood, that all the members of the Association shall sustain, according to their power and ability, such member in upholding the objects of the Association; it being expressly understood and declared, that no acts shall warrant the interference of this committee except such as it is the declared object of the foregoing provisions to prevent."

"Your Committee further recommend, that all works on which the metropolitan Builders are engaged within the circle of the London Postal District shall be discontinued Saturday next, the 6th August current, and that it shall be intimated to each workman that, so soon as Messrs. Trollope and Sons have resumed their works, the other Master Builders will re-open their works on a new agreement, as contained in the subjoined notification, which shall also be posted up where it can conveniently be done, at each place where works of members are in progress.

"'NOTICE.

"'A formidable and wide-spread combination of workmen, organized by irresponsible associations connected with a Conference of the United Building Trades, having commenced to enforce by preconcerted dictation compliance with their demands, by compelling the persons in the employment of Messrs. Trollope and Sons to go out on strike, in order to coerce that firm into obedience to the "nine hours' movement," no alternative has been left to the Master Builders, in pure self-defence, and in justice to the rights and independence of the working classes, than to meet this aggression by calm and temperate resistance.

"'It has been distinctly intimated to the employers, that in the event of the present strike being successful, other victims of the combination will be taken in detail; and it has, therefore, become essential for every Master Builder who desires to control the application of his own capital, and to defend his right to manage his own affairs, to meet conspiracy by co-operation.

"'The employers are, therefore, reluctantly constrained to announce that their several works will be discontinued on the 6th of August, in order that their capital may not be used by the employed to the injury of their workmen and themselves, and in assisting an aggression upon the very capitalist who supplies it.

"'The employers are, however, fully alive to the hardship of depriving those peaceable workmen of their employment who are not responsible for the strike. They readily acknowledge the grave

responsibility of the measures on which they have agreed, and the duty of so mitigating their stringency as that the unoffending shall be, as far as possible, exempted from the infliction of the penalties of which it is essential that the real aggressors should be made examples.

"'It has therefore been determined, that immediately on Messrs. Trollope and Sons resuming their works, the other employers will afford their peaceable and well-disposed workmen an opportunity of co-operating with them in crushing the pernicious movement of the self-constituted Conference, by re-engaging at their respective works all who are ready, honestly and without any equivocation, to agree to the following conditions, for a faithful adherence to which it was unanimously agreed that the employers should trust to the honest verbal assurance of the employed.

"'A cheque, or file-engagement book, with duplicate successive numbers, shall be kept by the foreman, clerk, or other person by whom the workmen of the establishment are engaged, and he shall read over to each applicant, and hand to him at the time of his engagement, a printed copy of the following "Memorandum of Agreement:"—

"'I declare that I am not now, nor will I, during the continuance of my engagement with you, become a member of, or support, any society which, directly or indirectly, interferes with the arrangements of this or any other establishment, or the hours or terms of labour; and that I recognise the right of employers and employed individually to make any trade engagements on which they may choose to agree.

"'Every workman shall be distinctly required to pledge his word to the observance of these conditions, and on his name being entered on the file of the engagement book, and the duplicate agreement detached and handed to him, he may resume his employment.'

"Your Committee would further advise that every firm connected with the metropolitan building trades should be invited to become members of the Association, and to co-operate in observing the foregoing suggestions.

"The executive committee of the proposed Association should be instructed to publish a calmly reasoned address explanatory of their proceedings, to select permanent offices, and to sit daily to receive communications, enrol members, enter subscriptions, and direct all necessary measures during the continuance of the strike.

"In conclusion, your Committee would recommend that, to continue to meritorious workmen the advantages of the legitimate objects from which existing Trades' Unions or Societies have been diverted, the proposed Association should give authority to the executive committee to submit for its sanction a plan for the establishment of a new, sound, and legitimate Benefit Society."

This report was adopted by the meeting, and resolutions were passed in accordance with it.

On the 2nd of August, Lord Brougham, in the House of Lords, called the attention of the Government to the strike and threatened lock-out. Lord Granville, on the part of the Government, said their

attention had already been drawn to the subject, and that as far as it was competent for them to interfere, which could only be in maintaining peace and order, they would do so.

On the 3rd of August the operatives engaged in the building trades made an open-air demonstration in Hyde Park, for the purpose of showing their disapprobation of the proposed document. Many thousands were present, and the proceedings were conducted with regularity, and quiet and order were strictly preserved. Several speeches were made, and the following resolution was carried:—

"That this meeting views with regret the position of antagonism assumed by the employers, inasmuch as the spirit they display is calculated to widen the breach already existing, by endeavouring to trample out the spirit of humanity which originated, and still animates, the nine hours' movement; and as the pledge which they would exact from us by signing the document they propose submitting, would rob us of every privilege of free men, and reduce us to the condition of serfs, we determine to use every moral power of resistance, and pledge ourselves to use all constitutional measures for bringing the nine hours' movement to a successful termination."

On Saturday, August the 6th, in conformity with the recommendations of their committee, and the resolutions carried by the Master Builders' Association, 225 of the largest firms of the city, employing, it was said, 24,000 out of the 40,000 artisans, closed their shops. This number included every builder employing more than fifty men, and some of the smaller firms.

Several very large and important works, where many hundreds of workmen were employed, were of necessity closed; in some cases an extension of time was conceded to the builders, in others the emergency had been provided for by the insertion of a strike clause in the builders' contracts.

Various attempts were made, during the few days following the strike, to mediate between the two parties, by referring the matter in dispute to certain well-known and influential men, but, as all these were based on the assumption that the document was to be withdrawn as a preliminary step to the negotiation, and as the masters declined to take this step, they proved to be abortive.

At a crowded meeting of the Society of Masons, August 10th, a resolution was unanimously carried, "That it is the opinion of this meeting that the document presented to the masons of London for their acceptance, either verbally or in writing, is degrading and insulting, and that the master builders have by this act shown great inconsistency, by denouncing combinations on the part of the workmen while promoting the same line of conduct themselves, and demanding that all the workmen in their employment shall virtually constitute themselves slaves to their dictation; and this meeting pledges itself that it will not resume work except on the unconditional withdrawal of everything in the shape of a document, promise, or agreement."

The number of men thrown out of employment on the 6th of

August, exclusive of Messrs. Trollopes' men, is represented to have been upwards of 20,000; but of these not more than half were thrown upon the support of the Conference. Of the others, large numbers left London immediately to seek work in the country, and many obtained work from the smaller builders who had not closed their shops. The remainder, who were unable thus to obtain work, were one week without wages, and for the second week they received from the Conference 1*s.* each, and numbered as follows:

Labourers	3,245	Smiths	80
Carpenters	2,816	Stone sawyers . . .	67
Bricklayers	1,077	Men at Woolwich, all branches	551
Plasterers	662		
Masons	547		
Painters	362		9,407

These numbers gradually diminished to between 5000 and 6000, at which point they remained steadily for some weeks. The sums distributed amongst them were never more than 4*s.* 6*d.*, and averaged only 3*s.* 6*d.* per week, though these sums were increased in most cases to 5*s.* or 8*s.* by the several societies to which the men belonged.*

The number of men on strike at Messrs. Trollopes' was originally 312, but fell in the second week to 240, and in the third to 180, and then by degrees to about 100. Till the end of November they received from the Conference weekly sums varying from 15*s.* to 12*s.* for skilled workmen, and from 10*s.* to 8*s.* for labourers.

To obtain these moneys, meetings were held at various towns throughout the country, including Plymouth, Nottingham, Birmingham, Sheffield, Glasgow and Manchester, at all of which resolutions expressive of sympathy with the men were passed, and subscriptions remitted in aid of the men locked out.†

About the same time a movement was got up by some men who disapproved of the strike and of the interference of trades' societies between masters and men, and who formed an anti-strike committee. They received subscriptions from the public, and were joined by about five hundred men, who enrolled their names and declared themselves ready to go to work under the declaration, on condition that it should be made a shop rule only, and that the actual signing should be dispensed with. But the movement does not appear to have met with success, and shortly became defunct.

On the 6th of September, Messrs. Trollope intimated to the Masters' Association that they had 210 men at work under the declaration, whereupon it was resolved—

"That all the members of the Association be recommended to re-open their establishments."

In accordance with this resolution, the Association of Masters opened their shops generally on the 12th of September to such of the operatives as chose to work on the conditions of the declaration.

* See Appendix A. † See Appendix B.

As the masters adhered to it, their efforts to obtain men were in most cases without success; for where the declaration was presented, very few went in. At Messrs. Cubitt's, where 900 had been employed, 200 men were re-engaged. This number included some of the smiths, bricklayers, plasterers, and painters, but no skilled masons.

In no other case was anything like the same proportion of workmen re-engaged, and most of the great works in the metropolis continued suspended from want of skilled workmen. At Messrs. Pipers, out of eleven hundred, only twenty-five sawyers and joiners went in and re-engaged; and at Messrs. ——, out of twelve hundred men, not more than half a dozen. Some few of the members of the Masters' Association opened their workshops without exacting the declaration, and re-engaged their workmen without difficulty.

The number of men who took work at once under the declaration was hardly equal to those who signed the anti-strike declaration.

There can be little doubt that the Trades' Conference viewed with great unwillingness the engagement of men under the declaration, and kept a close watch upon the workshops and buildings where men were engaged, with a view to dissuading men from joining on such terms. Their emissaries did not always confine themselves in these endeavours within the laws, and were on more than one occasion summoned before the police-courts and convicted of intimidating and annoying non-society men. These convictions were appealed against, but were supported by the superior courts of law.*

During the succeeding week the masters made some progress in engaging workmen by scouring the country in search of men to supply the places of those who refused to come in; whilst the Conference at the Paviors' Arms, on their part, did all they could to intercept these men before their arrival.

Several attempts were made from this time by independent parties to induce a compromise between the masters and men, on the understanding that the men should resume work on the old terms, and that the document should be withdrawn. Besides these attempts, we find that a negotiation with a similar object was entered into independently by the operative masons and their masters, which, though unsuccessful, was attended with one important consequence to the strike generally.

Prior to this negotiation the operative masons had not been supported in the strike by their separate Trade Union, the object of the strike not having been approved by the society generally, and it therefore not being a legal strike, within the meaning of the term, as understood by the Society.

Whilst negotiating with the masters, the men insisted upon the absolute withdrawal of the declaration, to which the masters answered:—

"That the Executive Committee of the Master Builders cannot now withdraw a declaration (already assented to by upwards of fifteen

* See Law Journal, xxix., Magistrates' Cases, 33.

thousand workmen) which recognises the freedom of labour, and acknowledges the independence of both workmen and employers."

From this time the lock-out of the masons was considered to rest solely on the demand of the masters for the declaration. This made it a legal strike, according to the rules of their society, and entitled those out of work, in consequence of this demand, to an allowance of ten shillings per week out of the funds of the society.

From this time but little change was made in the relative positions of masters and men till the 14th of November, when the Conference at the Paviors' Arms came to a decision to abandon the strike at Messrs. Trollopes in the following resolution :—

"The Conference of the Building Trades of London having carefully considered the present position of the lock-outs, have determined to withdraw the strike at Messrs. Trollopes', in order effectually to oppose the declaration and retain the support of the trades of the United Kingdom, and that a determined stand be made to entirely overthrow the odious document."

While this measure effected but little change in the numbers of workmen remaining out of work, the masters who still adhered to the declaration were gradually filling their shops with workmen from the country. The number of men out of work, which had been upwards of ten thousand in August, had fallen gradually to about five thousand in October, at which they remained stationary for many weeks ; for the support of these, contributions were received which for many weeks averaged about £1,000, which were distributed at about 4*s.* 6*d.*, and for labourers 3*s.* 6*d.*; these sums it must be evident were so small as to entail a considerable amount of suffering throughout the winter months, to those at least who were without support from their separate trades' societies. The returns of the Registrar-General of the mortality in the Building Trades were a melancholy index of this, and showed both the nature of the hardships which the men were undergoing and the strength of purpose which induced them still to hold out against going to work under the document.*

In the beginning of December a suggestion was made by Lord St. Leonards that the document should be withdrawn, and that, in lieu of it, there should be hung up in every shop a paper embodying the law affecting masters and men in the following terms:—

" The law affecting masters and workmen was framed with a jealous regard to the interests of the working man. The Act of Parliament (6 George IV. cap. 129) which repealed all the former laws relative to the combination of workmen, states that combinations interfering with the free employment of capital and labour are injurious to trade and commerce, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and especially to the interests of all who are concerned in them.

"The object of the Act is then declared to be to make provision, as well for the security and personal freedom of individual workmen in

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* See Appendices C. and D.

the disposal of their skill and labour as for the security of the property and persons of masters and employers.

"The Act then makes the following offences punishable by imprisonment not exceeding three months, with or without hard labour, viz.: Where any person shall, by violence to the person or property, or by threats, or by intimidation, or by molesting, or in any way obstructing another,—

"1. Force, or endeavour to force, any journeyman, manufacturer, or workman, or other person to depart from his hiring, employment, or work, or to return his work before it is finished;

"2. Or prevent, or endeavour to prevent, any journeyman, manufacturer, workman, or other person not being hired or employed, from hiring himself to, or from accepting work or employment from, any person or persons;

"3. Or for the purpose of forcing or inducing any other person to belong to any club or association, or to contribute to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty, or on account of his not belonging to any club or association, or not having contributed, or having refused to contribute, to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty; or on account of his not having complied, or his refusing to comply, with any rules, orders, resolutions, or regulations made to obtain an advance or to reduce the rate of wages, or to lessen or alter the hours of working, or to decrease or alter the quantity of work, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any manufacture, trade or business, or the management thereof;

"4. Or shall force, or endeavour to force, any manufacturer or person carrying on any trade or business to make any alterations in his mode of regulating, managing, or carrying on such trade, manufacture, or business, or to limit his number of apprentices or the number or description of his journeymen, workmen, or servants.

"But the Act provides:—

"1. That any persons may meet together for the sole purpose of consulting upon and determining the rate of wages or prices upon which the *persons present at such meeting*, or any of them, shall require or demand for his or their work, or the hours or time for which he or they shall work in any manufacture, trade, or business; or may enter into any agreement, verbal or written, *among themselves*, for the purposes of fixing the rate of wages or prices which the parties entering into such agreement, or any of them, shall require or demand for his or their work, or the hours or time for which he or they will work in any manufacture, trade, or business.

"This relates to the men.

"2. The like powers are conferred upon the master in regard to consulting upon and fixing the rate of wages or price, and the hours or time of working;—each class, masters and men, are subject to the same law.

"By a later Act, 22 Vict. cap. 34, passed to protect the working man, it is provided that no one, whether in actual employment or not, shall, by reason merely *of his entering into any agreement with any*

workman or other person or persons, for the purpose of fixing, or endeavouring to fix, the rate of wages or remuneration at which they or any of them shall work, or by reason merely of his endeavouring peaceably, and in reasonable manner, and ***without threats or intimidation, direct or indirect***, to persuade others to cease or abstain from work, in order to obtain the rate of wages or the altered hours of labour so fixed or agreed upon, be deemed or taken to be guilty of 'molestation or obstruction' within the meaning of the former Act, and shall not therefore be subject to prosecution or indictment for conspiracy. But it is provided, that nothing contained in this later Act shall authorize any workman to break or depart from any contract, or authorize any attempt to induce any workman to break or depart from any contract.

"Such is the law which binds both classes. The masters accept its obligations without reserve, and pledge themselves to obey it both in letter and spirit. They have set forth the provisions of the Acts of Parliament in order that every workman may be informed of the ***law*** which binds him. The law itself, the masters find, lays down the true rules both for them and their men; they, therefore, have withdrawn the declaration originally required from the men, and substitute this paper. It alone will bind the workmen who have already made or accepted the original declaration; all will be placed on the same footing. There will be no distinction between those now at work and those who may resume work. The masters, in the spirit of peace and good-will, require nothing of the men but the same obedience to the law as they themselves are ready to pay. The law itself, and nothing more, but nothing less, shall become the ***rule of trade.***

"The simple object of the masters is that, according to the laws, they and their workmen shall be free to make what agreements they please, without the interference or coercion of any other persons. With that object, the acceptance of employment where this paper is hung up will be considered to amount to an admission by the workman that he is not at that time, and to a declaration that during his employment he will not become, bound to any rules or customs which do or would deprive him or his fellow-workmen of their free liberty to accept and continue, or to relinquish employment upon such terms as they think fit.

"Freedom of action will place every man according to his merit; but the motto of both men and masters should be, 'Let labour be unshackled.'

"ST. LEONARDS.

"Dec. 10, 1859."

This suggestion of Lord St. Leonards was finally, on the 6th of February, agreed to by the masters at a meeting held for that purpose, and the following resolution was passed:

"The objects contemplated by the declaration having now been accomplished, its further formal administration is unnecessary: that the suggestion of Lord St. Leonards be adopted in substitution for

the declaration, and that it be remitted to the Executive Committee to take the steps necessary for giving effect to this resolution."

The effect of this was to put a final end to the lock-out and strike. The last dividend of the Conference was paid on Monday, February 27th, and the movement in favour of the nine hours may be considered from that time as closed or postponed.

A circular was issued by the Conference expressing thanks for the support they had received, and suggesting that, as the "document" had been withdrawn, the nine hours' movement should be revived. It does not however appear that any steps have been taken by the Trades in furtherance of this suggestion.

In an Appendix to this Report will be found a short *resumé* of the balance-sheet of the Conference, from which it appears that the sums contributed by workmen in other trades, in London and the country, and expended by the Conference in support of the skilled workmen and labourers out of work, amounted to about £23,000. It must be remarked, however, that this sum represents but a very small portion of the losses resulting to the men from the Strike and Lock-out. The amount of wages which was sacrificed by them would be indicated by a sum of nearly ten times the above amount; while, on the other hand, the losses entailed upon the masters by the stoppage of their trade, from the loss of profits, and from the failure of interest upon their capital invested, would be represented by an amount of great magnitude,—the public, on their part, having suffered by the stoppage of many works of immediate importance, and by the interference with other trades caused by the suspension of so large a branch of industry as the Building Trades. We have abstained in this Report from any comments upon the conduct of the parties engaged in the contest; but we cannot conclude without expressing our hope, that the consideration of these losses, and of the suffering and ruin entailed by them, may have its due weight in influencing the conduct of both masters and their workmen; and that, in aid of better motives, it may lead to a spirit of conciliation and of forbearance which will be conducive to the prosperity and happiness of both parties.

APPENDIX A.

Number of Mechanics and Labourers relieved by the Conference during the Strike and Lock-out, and the amounts paid away.

Week ending	No. of Men.	Each.	Total.			
		s.	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Aug. 22	9,812	1	1	531	9	8
Sept. 5	7,757	3	0	1,163	11	0
„ 12	7,321	3	6	1,281	3	6
„ 19	7,013	4	0	1,402	12	0
„ 26	6,891	4	0	1,278	4	0
Oct. 3	6,296	4	0	1,259	4	0
„ 10	5,779	4	0	1,155	16	0

During these weeks the mechanics and labourers were paid equal dividends.

MECHANICS.							LABOURERS.					
							No. of Men.	Each.		Total.		
								s.	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Oct. 17	3,314	4	0	666	16	0	2,891	3	0	433	13	0
„ 24	2,860	3	6	500	10	0	2,838	2	6	354	15	0
„ 31	2,784	3	6	487	4	0	2,827	2	6	353	7	6
Nov. 7	2,825	4	6	635	12	6	2,787	3	6	487	14	6
„ 14	2,418	4	6	542	18	6	2,680	3	6	469	0	0
„ 21	2,310	4	6	519	15	0	2,580	3	6	451	10	0
„ 28	2,253	3	6	394	5	6	1,948	2	6	243	10	0
Dec. 5	2,145	3	6	375	7	6	Labourers suspended.					
„ 12	2,119	3	6	370	16	6						
„ 19	2,094	3	6	366	19	0						
„ 24	2,057	3	0	308	11	0						
Jan. 2	2,072	2	0	207	4	0						
„ 9	2,121	2	6	265	2	6						
„ 16	2,014	3	0	302	2	0						
„ 23	1,863	4	0	372	12	0						
„ 30	1,831	4	0	366	4	0						
Feb. 6	1,887	4	0	377	8	0						
„ 13	1,822	4	0	364	8	0						
„ 20	1,712	4	0	342	8	0						
„ 27	1,572	6	0	471	12	0						

In addition to these sums, the Bricklayers' Society distributed among their members out on strike, and independently of what they contributed to the Conference, the sum of £8,110.

In like manner, the Carpenters and Joiners' Society distributed from their own funds among their members £5,000, and the Plasterers' Society the sum of £2,370.

APPENDIX B.

Balance-sheet of the Conference of the Building Trades.

EXPENDITURE.	£	*s.*	*d.*
Dividend paid to Masons from August 22 to November 7 ...	790	13	10
„ „ Carpenters and Joiners, from Aug. 22 to Feb. 27	4,451	2	0
„ „ Bricklayers	2,935	18	9
„ „ Plasterers	2,799	16	6
„ „ Painters	768	8	4
„ „ Woolwich men	499	1	3
„ „ Stone-sawyers, from Aug. 22 to Nov. 12 ...	153	10	0
„ „ Labourers, from Aug. 22 to Nov. 28	6,525	16	3
„ „ Trollopes' men, from Aug. 1 to Nov. 21 ...	1,432	19	4
Advertisements	34	10	1
Committees	85	7	3

	£	s.	d.
Deputations and delegations	761	10	10
Loans repaid	380	0	0
Printing	258	1	9
Expenses of meetings	177	12	0
Sending men back to the country	79	1	9
Stationery	22	7	1
Tramps	14	4	0
Sundries	85	16	6
General expenses, executive and audit	494	11	7
Total	22,750	4	1

RECEIPTS.

Subscriptions received from Blackburn	306	5	6
,, ,, ,, Birmingham	358	14	8
,, ,, ,, Barnsley	230	0	0
,, ,, ,, Bristol	309	8	4
,, ,, ,, Dublin	360	18	2
,, ,, ,, Glasgow	866	16	8
,, ,, ,, Liverpool	518	3	1
,, ,, ,, Manchester	837	19	6
,, ,, ,, Nottingham	152	14	0
,, ,, ,, Preston	105	8	0
,, ,, ,, Sheffield	173	2	7
,, ,, ,, United Flint-glass makers	300	0	0
,, ,, ,, Leeds	87	15	8
,, ,, ,, Edinburgh	62	6	0
,, ,, ,, Derby	132	3	0
,, ,, ,, Coachmakers of United Kingdom ...	138	5	0
,, ,, ,, 238 other towns and places in the country	3,251	0	0
Total from the country	8,190	19	9
,, ,, ,, Amalgamated Engineers' Society	3,100	0	0
,, ,, ,, Bricklayers' levy	582	0	0
,, ,, ,, Boiler makers and iron ship builders	655	0	0
,, ,, ,, Bookbinders	227	2	0
,, ,, ,, Carpenters' Societies	514	15	0
,, ,, ,, Compositors' Society	620	0	0
,, ,, ,, Cabinet-makers	170	0	0
,, ,, ,, Cigar-makers	108	10	1
,, ,, ,, Coachmakers	170	10	0
,, ,, ,, Coopers	616	0	0
,, ,, ,, Farriers	100	0	0
,, ,, ,, Hatters	139	0	0
,, ,, ,, Iron Founders of United Kingdom	140	0	0
,, ,, ,, Masons, General Union of ...	114	11	6
,, ,, ,, Plasterers' levies	618	0	0
,, ,, ,, Piano-forte makers	300	0	0
,, ,, ,, Shipwrights, Port of London ...	300	0	0
,, ,, ,, Reynolds's Newspaper	242	8	5
,, ,, ,, Tin-plate workers	263	0	0
,, ,, ,, Other subscriptions, and two collections in London	5,998	9	10
Total in London	14,974	6	10
Total Receipts	23,165	6	7
Total Expenditure	22,750	4	1
Balance	£415	2	6

(N.B. Only the most important subscriptions have been specially noticed.)

APPENDIX C.

Extract from Report of Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England for the year 1859.

"During the latter part of the year the chief masters and the men in the building trades of London were in a state of open war. The masters closed their establishments on August 6th, and afterwards only employed men who would sign a document. The men refused, to the number it was said of 20,000. The Conference of the trades' societies distributed certain sums among their members; and in the sixth week as many as 14,000 received allowances. These allowances were however inadequate; the means and credit of many failed; the small shopkeepers, instead of £9 or £10 took no more than £2 or £3 a week from the families of the workmen. The distress became in some cases urgent, yet the struggle was protracted through the rest of the year. The wives evidently thought their husbands in the right, and suffered with them the pangs of hunger. A relieving officer thus writes on September 1st, 'I visited this man's lodging; he was out, but his wife was in bed, with scarcely a rag to cover her, evidently gradually sinking from want; the room contained scarcely an article of furniture and presented a most destitute, and neglected, and dirty appearance. She said, "We are starving, sir; we have neither fire nor food." "Why," I replied, "does not your husband go to work?" "What!" she exclaimed, with considerable energy, "to become worse than a slave!"'

"This distress produced ultimately a sensible effect on the mortality of the men and their wives. As long as there was bread, the poor children, however, apparently had it; until weakened, cold, ill-clad, they at last died in unusual numbers as the severe weather came on towards the close of the year.

"The following table shows the deaths in the various branches of the building trades during three successive periods of six weeks. If the numbers in the first six weeks may be taken as the average numbers, the excess in the two following periods is considerable. Neither the additional workmen who came to town, nor the weather, will account for the whole increase.

"*Summary in periods of six weeks of the Deaths in five branches of the Building Trades.*

Periods of Six Weeks.	Bricklayers.			Carpenters.			Masons.			Painters.			Plasterers.		
	Men.	Wives.	Children.	Men.	Wives.	Children.	Men.	Wives.	Children.	Men.	Wives.	Children.	Men.	Wives.	Children.
1859. Sept. 10 to Oct. 22.	8	5	29	24	26	105	3	2	11	26	10	51	4	1	15
Oct. 22 to Dec. 3.	19	10	80	59	22	101	9	6	16	37	17	67	6	7	11
Dec. 3 to Jan. 14, 1860.	15	12	54	47	26	185	10	6	16	42	14	50	10	6	34"

APPENDIX D.

Extract from Letter of a Scripture Reader of a populous district in London.

"I am able to testify, from personal observation, of the very great distress which the strike has caused in the cases of many families living in my district. I have seen many families reduced from a state of comparative comfort to one of extreme wretchedness. Piece after piece of their furniture was sold to procure bread; their clothes were pawned, and at last, where there had been prosperity and comfort, nothing remained but ruin and misery; some of them have left the district, but some remain.

"There is a couple named ——; they are young people, were married just before the strike commenced last year, they seemed likely to do well; but in consequence of the strike the man lost his work, became reckless, enlisted into the army, leaving his wife in the greatest distress.

"I recollect, too, visiting a family named ——; they were a short time ago bordering on starvation, and this, I was assured, was directly attributable to the strike.

"But the most painful case which has come under my notice was that of a family named ——. I became acquainted with the man a few years ago, he was a very industrious, sober and intelligent man, but his misfortune commenced with the strike; he was not a 'society man,' and did not wish to strike; his furniture gradually disappeared, his decent clothes were all at last lodged in the pawnshop, and he and his family reduced to great want. At last, after being out of work several months, he obtained employment, but it proved too much for his exhausted frame; after working for a few days he was attacked by fever, and died after a week's illness, leaving a wife and several young children, who are at the present time, I fear, without clothes or food. Until lately I have been engaged only in a part of my district, had I been engaged in the whole of the district during the last twelve months, I believe I should be able to bring forward many other painful and distressing cases.

"June 2nd, 1860."

REPORT

ON

PRINTERS' STRIKES AND TRADE UNIONS

SINCE JANUARY, 1845.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By J. W. CROMPTON.*

Various Typographical Societies throughout the kingdom were united in January, 1845, and formed the National Typographical Association. The affairs of the Association were managed by a Central Board or Committee, consisting of five District Boards collectively—in which resided the executive power, a majority of whose votes decided every question—and the Committees of each Local Society or Branch belonging to the Union.

The five Districts were

Northern—Scotland, having Eight Branches or Local Societies at principal towns, with		800 members.
Western—Ireland, Eleven Branches ...	„	569 „
Midland—Twenty-two Branches ...	„	714 „
South-Western—Twelve Branches ...	„	237 „
South-Eastern—Seven Branches ...	„	2,000 „
Total		4,320 members.

The Trade in Manchester did not join the Association, and remained united amongst themselves in a Society which had previously been in association with the Northern Union. Most of the Societies which had formed part of the Northern Union joined the National Association, the Northern Union ceasing to exist. The Association was formed to enable the profession to co-operate throughout the kingdom in carrying on any defensive warfare with their employers, and to come to a common understanding on matters in dispute affecting the general welfare of the trade.

* I desire to express my thanks to Mr. Melson, of Liverpool, Mr. Dronfield, of Sheffield, and Mr. Wilkie, of Edinburgh, as well as to several Master Printers, for their invaluable assistance in preparing this Report.

A case of dispute between employer and employed being brought before a Local Society's or Branch Committee, their decision was submitted to the District Board of Direction, for approval and confirmation; if the question was thought too important for the decision of the District Board, it was laid before the Central Board, which finally gave or refused the support of the Association according to its own judgment. The appeal to the Executive was final so far as the Association was concerned, but each District Board could act independently, if it thought fit to do so, in any matter, but without the support of the Association and use of its funds. It was the aim of the Association to produce, as far as possible, a uniformity of trade usages throughout the country, to bring the profession to a common understanding on all questions arising between employers and employed, especially in relation to the number of apprentices or boys in proportion to journeymen printers, and the prices of labour, and to support the unemployed to a limited extent while in search of work.

It was thus hoped that strikes would become less frequent, or at least shortened in duration, and that the tramp system would be abolished, by the substitution of a weekly payment made in the town to which the hand belonged while unemployed. The Committee of Management being the centre, each District Board and Local Society acted to some extent independently, having the judgment and support of the Executive to fall back upon in case of need.

In case of a dispute arising between masters and men in which the Executive determined to support the demands of the men, the members of the Association were withdrawn from the office, receiving strike allowance if the employers did not yield; the office being denominated unfair, and the employer being obliged to get what workmen he could, non-members of the Association.

Members of the Association, however, in certain districts, did not refuse to work with non-members in offices where association rules were not violated, and from which men had not been discharged solely upon the ground of being members of the Association, and in order to make way for non-members.

In the first half-year twenty-six cases of dispute were submitted to the Executive, such as the following:—

Were men working in "unfair" offices entitled to admission into the Association on payment of entrance fee?

Decided, that the office must be declared "fair" by the District Board.

The London employers sought to reduce the price of work 1*d.* per 1,000 for appeal cases. This was resisted, and after a month's struggle the employers gave way.

It was decided that the weekly allowance to members on strike was to be paid only for six months after the date of the strike.

At the end of the first year, the gross income was	£1,637	17	8½
Total expenditure	713	17	1
General balance in hands of Association ...	£924	0	7½

The second Report speaks favourably of the position of the Association, the number of members increasing. Twenty-five cases of dispute were submitted to the Executive in the second half-year.

An employer in the Northern District having attempted to reduce the rate of wages, the attempt was resisted, and after six weeks' struggle the employer yielded.

The trade generally being brisk in the North, and a restrictive system as to the number of apprentices in offices having been adopted in Edinburgh some three years previously, journeymen's wages in Edinburgh rose from 11*s.* and 14*s.*, at the passing of the restrictive laws, to 18*s.* and 20*s.* average rate per week.

Work from an "unfair" office was not to be done by a "fair" office.

In this Report a great decrease in the number of tramps seeking employment is noticed in several districts, indicating the success of the Association in this direction. Number of members, at the end of second half-year, 4,970.

Gross income	£2,461	7	6
Previous balance	924	0	7½
	£3,385	8	1½
Total expenditure	1,397	14	10½
Balance in hand	£1,987	13	3

In March, 1846, a meeting of delegates from the Association was held, to consider a proposition emanating from the London Society, and sanctioned by the Executive, with reference to the number of apprentices the trade ought to recognise in proportion to journeymen.

In some offices no apprentices were employed; in others, the proportion varied from nine men to four boys to as many boys as men, and even more.

It was proposed and resolved, that

In book offices, or book and newspaper offices, one apprentice should be allowed to four men, each office being allowed two apprentices, irrespective of the number of men.

In newspaper offices not more than three apprentices shall be employed; and where more than one newspaper is made up, a portion of one being used in the production of a second, two apprentices to be allowed for each paper so produced. No apprentice allowed upon a daily paper.

It was also resolved that all boys must be legally bound as apprentices, and in the case of a boy being under a second master he must be bound to him by a written witnessed agreement.

The third Report notices general prosperity in the trade in the Northern and Midland Districts. In the North, Sunday wages were raised to double week-day wages; a rise of about 3*s.* per week is noticed in two Midland localities.

Forty-six cases of dispute were submitted to the Executive, and

several offices were closed in which the recognised rate of wages in the locality was not given.

Members refusing to pay their subscription were expelled from the Association, the office being consequently closed to Society men, it was however subsequently reopened.

The number of members increased to 5,421.

Gross income	£2,068	16	10½
Previous balance	1,987	13	3
	£4,056	10	1½
Expenditure (£771 invested in £790 stock)	2,144	6	0
Balance	£1,912	4	1½

In the fourth half-year of the Association's existence, upwards of ninety cases of dispute were submitted to the Executive.

A strike occurred in London with reference to the apprentice regulations adopted by the Association, involving an expenditure of £500 in payments to men on strike.

In the South-eastern District alone (which included London) the expenditure and payments to unemployed hands not on strike amounted to £1,200, trade being very dull.

Double subscriptions were paid for six months by employed members, one shilling instead of sixpence per week. Thirty-eight employers in Edinburgh combined to break up the Association in December, 1846, preferring to employ non-society men. This strike terminating in favour of the masters, broke up the Edinburgh Society.

At the close of the year 1846 a defalcation was discovered in the accounts of a district, amounting to £90 17*s.* 3*d.*, and this, combined with other causes, produced a feeling of distrust and dissatisfaction throughout the trade, leading many to desert the Association; and ultimately it was found necessary to abandon the attempt to unite the trade throughout the kingdom into one Association.

A difference of opinion existed as to the desirability of supporting the unemployed hands connected with the Association out of the Association funds; it was thought unfair advantage was taken of it; and the tramp system, which assisted men in travelling expenses while in search of work, was preferred in some localities; in large towns, however, the new system established by the Association of supporting the unemployed men with a weekly allowance of 6*s.* was found to work satisfactorily.

With a view of saving the funds of the Association by giving employment to the unemployed London hands on strike, a newspaper was established, which did not succeed as was expected, and the scheme had to be abandoned, entailing a loss on the Association of about £100. The Association seems to have exercised its power with moderation and with firmness; but the opprobrious epithets bestowed on those who stood aloof from the Association indicates a feeling of bitterness against non-unionists not justified by the position they took.

During the year 1847, the Edinburgh strike, already noticed, cost the Association £2,000, which, combined with payments to unemployed members to the extent of £1,900, placed the Association in an embarrassed position; and although attempts were made to introduce concord throughout the Union by modifying rules relating to allowance to unemployed, &c., the Association broke up in the course of the year into District Associations in different parts of the country.

The real and fundamental cause of the weakness and decline of the National Association lay in the fact that the labour market was overstocked; and it was impossible to unite the whole trade into one organized body sufficiently strong in their union to give some support to the unemployed, to prevent them from being tempted to accept "unfair" terms, as well as to maintain those on strike.

The National Typographical Association was succeeded in June, 1849, by the Provincial Typographical Association, managed by an Executive Committee, and having Branch Societies in seventeen of the principal towns in England; London, Manchester, and Birmingham being excepted.

This Association attempted to accomplish in the provinces of England what the National Association aimed to realize for the trade throughout the kingdom, aiming especially to avoid collisions between employers and employed, demanding for the men only what it believed to be reasonable, and restraining unjustifiable action on the part of the men.

Commencing with seventeen Branches and 481 members, it gradually gained strength, and in the third year of its existence numbered twenty-one Branches and 600 members.

In 1852 Manchester became a Branch; but the trade was still too much divided to enable the Association to do more than mediate between employers and employed in certain localities, and, as far as possible, resist any encroachments made upon the trade usages of each locality.

The strikes with which this Association has had to deal have invariably been local, and affecting only one office in the same locality at one time and for the same cause.

A strike was authorized by the Executive in Liverpool, fourteen hands having left an office owing to mere labouring men having been put to presswork. This strike cost the Association £108.

A man was also supported on strike in another Liverpool office; his master declining to pay the wages he had been accustomed to receive.

With a view of relieving the trade of surplus hands, several Emigration Societies were formed; and in the year 1853 it was proposed to the trade throughout the kingdom to unite in establishing the National Typographical Emigration Society.

It was proposed that every Association of journeymen printers, and apprentices in their last year, wishing to become a Branch, shall contribute 10*s.* per month for every ten members earning more than two-thirds wages; less then two-thirds, 6*s.* 8*d.*; less than one-third,

3*s.* 4*d.*; and in proportion to whatever sum such subscription may amount to, for the period of two years, shall be the claim of such Branch as to the number of emigrants to be allotted for its disposal in accordance with the following scale:—

No. of full paying Members in Branch.

200 at £10 per month, in two years, £240 } being equal to
100 at £5 do. do. do. do. £120 }
13⅓ grants of £18 each to Australia, } or, 40 and 20 £6 grants
6⅔ do. do. do. do. } to America; and so on in proportion.

The six pound shares to be allotted by ballot every three months. One share of £6 being allowed to an emigrant proceeding to America, three shares (£18) being allowed to an emigrant proceeding to Australia.

It was hoped that by thus joining to enable some of the trade to emigrate, the surplus of labour might be reduced, and an effective remedy found for the evils which the trade had attempted to remove by restrictive regulations as to the number of apprentices, which regulations, however, they had never been able fully to enforce. It was expected that 400 or 500 hands would be enabled to emigrate in two years. The scheme, however, did not meet with the general support expected, and the number of emigrants who went out with means provided by the Association was comparatively limited.

The Liverpool Society, in 1853, anticipating some improvement in trade on the passing of the act affecting advertisement duty and newspaper supplement stamps, asked from their employers that the "extra wages for overtime" should commence from seven P.M., instead of from ten P.M. as previously. Twenty-four employers acquiesced, ten objected; the trade being however firm in the demand, with one exception the employers agreed. The office of the employer who did not come to terms was closed.

On entering upon the sixth year of its existence, the Association numbered twenty-eight Branches and 1,125 members; nevertheless, the Association was unable to enforce its rule in all localities limiting the number of apprentices. The towns Newcastle, Leeds, Birmingham, Derby, Leicester, and Bristol still remained unconnected with it.

Owing to the trade not being thoroughly united, and the general superabundance of labour, the Executive Committee frequently had to recommend a submission to certain grievances rather than the alternative of a strike.

A case of this kind occurred at Liverpool in 1857. The custom of the town had always been to allow only professional hands to feed the machines, whether jobbing or news. A large employer, however, wished to put non-professional hands to the work, which, if permitted to all employers, would sacrifice the profession to the extent of £30 per week.

The Liverpool Society naturally desired to resist this; the Executive, however, feeling that in the then existing state of trade the evil

could not be successfully resisted, more especially as in other large towns the feeding of the machines was not claimed by the profession, recommended submission to the change, and that the local society's rule be rescinded.

This was finally agreed to by the Liverpool Branch, on the understanding that those members who, during the twelve months following the alteration, lost situations in consequence of the change should be entitled to receive strike allowance from the Association. There is no record of this allowance having been claimed.

In 1858, the Association numbered thirty-three Branches and 1,322 members. A serious strike occurred at Birmingham (which town became a Branch in 1856) early in 1858, costing the Association nearly £300, twenty-six hands being upon strike. A newspaper office, publishing a daily paper, and supplying also the materials for a weekly one, demanded that the men should transfer the matter originally prepared for the daily paper, and put it into form for the weekly paper, only receiving payment at the established rate for piecework on the quantity of type set for the daily paper. This being equivalent to a reduction in wages, or working for nothing, the men determined to resist. The paper shortly after ceased to exist.

In September, 1858, a strike occurred in a newspaper office in Sheffield, owing to the introduction of non-society hands, which the Executive determined to resist, being convinced that the employer's object was to obtain a reduction in the rate of wages paid. Eighteen hands struck, and received strike-allowance to the extent of about £252, in addition to which a sum of £73 was paid by the local society. In connexion with this strike, an action for libel cost the local society for damages and litigation a further sum of £1,062. The printers' societies in various parts of the country, and the trades' unions of Sheffield, contributed £873 towards this large amount. No important strike took place in 1859. The Association consisted of thirty-five Branches and 1,351 members at the end of the year.

The total number of cases in which the Association has made payments to members in consideration of sacrifices made in support of union regulations, since its establishment in June, 1849, to December, 1859, is sixty-six Of these disputes, sixty-one originated in employers attempting to set aside the customs of the respective towns; and five were caused by men requesting an increase of wages.

Thirty-seven of these cases may be denominated strikes, the "offices" being "closed" to Society men, and non-society men taking their places. In thirty-three of these cases, the men gave notice, and in four the employers. In eleven of these strikes, some of the men refused to come out, viz. in two cases eight, in one six, in two two, and in six one. The number of men involved in each strike varies from one to twenty-six, five being about the average.

In several cases of strike an amicable arrangement was made, and the offices "re-opened."

In the twenty-nine cases of dispute which did not result in a strike, the offices remained open through the influence of the Executive) and

other causes) either with the masters or men; but in twenty-three cases some of the men were discharged.

The Provincial Typographical Association aims to regulate the provincial trade by supporting its local societies in limiting the hours of labour and the number of apprentices, and maintaining the standard rates of wages of each locality. The Association derives its income from entrance fees, weekly subscriptions, and fines; the entrance fee varies from 1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per member, according to the amount of cash balance in the hands of the Association at the time of entrance.* Branch societies of the Association pay a subscription of 2*d.* per member per week to the Association funds; members only partially employed being exempt from payment if their wages amount to less than one-half the current rate; those in receipt of one-half to three-quarters pay one-half subscription; those in receipt of more than three-fourths full wages pay the full subscription, 2*d.* per week.

The Association rule regulating the number of apprentices is as follows:—

"That no office shall be deemed worthy of imitation where there is a greater number of apprentices than *two*, unless *four* journeymen have been regularly employed for six months, when the number may be increased to three, but on no account to have more than three.

"That in all towns where custom has recognised the wisdom of this limitation, no innovation shall be permitted in any society connected with the Provincial Association." In other towns, where a greater number of apprentices has been permitted, the number not to be allowed to increase, and local societies in such towns to do all in their power to reduce the number to the prescribed limits.

With reference to the working time, at the established rate of weekly wages, the hours are limited to fifty-nine per week (which is counted as sixty, nine hours on Saturday being charged and paid for as ten), as a maximum. Overtime and Sunday work are left to local arrangement. No newspaper or other publication is allowed to be "farmed," that is to say, in no fair office is an overseer or foreman permitted to enter into an engagement with the proprietor of the paper to get it out for so much a week or month.

Persons are only eligible to become members of the Association who have served seven years' legal apprenticeship in the printing, printing and bookbinding, or printing and stationery business.

On a strike being authorized by the Executive in resisting any encroachment on the privileges of the profession, the men on strike receive weekly from the funds of the Association, for a period of six months, payments according to the following scale:—First nine weeks, three-quarters; second nine weeks, one-half, and for the last eight weeks, one-third wages of the locality. The men above fifty years of age receive payments for thirty-six weeks; first twelve

* The funds of the Association, according to the last half-yearly report (June 30th, 1860) amount to £736 1*s.* 9*d.*

weeks, three-fourths; second twelve weeks, one-half; and last twelve weeks, one-third of the regular wages of the locality. Overseers, and others receiving extra wages, are paid a strike allowance proportionate to the wages they have received. Should a strike hand obtain employment, the surplus of his earnings and strike money over and above the established wages is deducted from the amount of strike allowance otherwise due.

If, on the expiration of the six months, a strike hand is obliged to seek work in another locality, he is provided with a strike card, which, on presentation to the treasurer of a Branch, will entitle him to receive double the amount of relief due to a member not on strike travelling in search of employment. This allowance varies according to the size of the Branch; a large society allowing 5*s.* and 10*s.* to a strike hand, a small Branch paying only 1*s.* or 2*s.*, both being paid to the same individual once only in twelve months.

Each Branch society of the Provincial Association has special rules of its own, conformable to the rules of the Association, but which the Association is not bound to support in case of violation. The local societies generally make some provision for death, sickness, for members out of employment, and some relief is given to men travelling in search of employment if they are members of a society reciprocating the allowance. This relief varies from 6*d.* to 5*s.*, with something extra on Saturdays.

In case of dispute arising between a master and his men, the local society's Committee decide upon the propriety or otherwise of resisting the encroachment; if they decide it ought to be resisted, they submit their decision to the Executive, which endeavours by deputation to adjust the dispute, having recourse finally to a strike if they are convinced circumstances justify it.

The Executive remark in their fifteenth half-yearly Report with reference to strikes—

"Many Branches have submitted cases which they conceived called for extreme measures, but in which the Executive have, after due inquiry and consideration, concluded otherwise. Strikes are at best an evil; and, although they are occasionally necessary, should not in the opinion of the Executive be resorted to except in flagrant innovations, and then only when all other measures have failed, and when, besides, a hope of success can be reasonably entertained.

"The expenditure of a large sum of money, and the endurance of much individual suffering, are not the only sequences of a strike, as it sometimes happens that they also lead to an aggravation of the very evils sought to be remedied."

The rates of wages, and customs as to extra rate per hour overtime, vary in different localities. At Liverpool, the rates are 30*s.* per week of fifty-nine hours, day labour, with 2*d.* per hour extra before eight in the morning or after seven in the evening, in jobbing offices, or newspapers published not oftener than twice a week; three times a week or more, 3*d.* per hour extra overtime or nightwork. Daywork is thus paid for at 6*d.* per hour; overtime or nightwork 8*d.* and 9*d.*

per hour. There is no rule limiting hours of labour, and no maximum rate of wages.

In Sheffield, the rate of wages per week of fifty-nine hours is 28*s.*, overtime 6*d.* per hour. Daily news hands receiving 5*s.* per week extra, and 7*d.* per hour overtime. Nightwork from ten P.M. to five A.M., and Sunday labour, 3*d.* per hour extra, 10*d.* per hour.

The Provincial Typographical Association does not permit a non-society man to work with society men, but admission into the Society is refused to none who have served in the business the proper apprenticeship of seven years. The Association allows matter once set up to be used by the same proprietor for as many purposes as he thinks fit, but a proprietor of a newspaper would not be permitted to sell, or transfer by mutual arrangement, matter prepared for his paper to reappear in the columns of a paper belonging to another proprietor. A case however occurred at Birmingham in 1857, in violation of this principle, in which the Executive of the Provincial Association refused to authorize a strike, and the men submitted to the grievance.

The London Trade is united in two Societies, the London Society of Compositors and London Society of Pressmen. The Society of Compositors is established to protect wages of labour, agreeably to provisions contained in the London Scale of Prices, agreed to by a Conference of Master Printers and Compositors in 1847, the scale of prices regulating news and parliamentary work, and such customs and usages as belong to the profession not directly mentioned in the said scales.

Such protection is subject to the decision of an Arbitration Committee, consisting of three masters nominated by the masters in whose office the dispute has arisen, and three journeymen who are not employed in the said office to be nominated by the journeymen; this Committee is presided over by a barrister as chairman, appointed annually, and who in all cases of division in which the votes of the arbitrators are equal, decides the question at issue by his casting vote. The Arbitration Committee base their decisions on a Scale made in 1810, with additions, definitions, and explanations arranged at a Conference of Master Printers and Compositors in 1847.

In case a dispute arise affecting the scale of prices or customs of the London Trade, and the master refuse to submit the question at issue to the Arbitration Committee, the Society may require the men to give up their situations, and until a general meeting of the Trade be called, temporarily close the office to members of the Society. Members who lose their situations receive as follows—

Those who have paid in last thirteen weeks' employment not less than 3*s.* 9*d.*, 25*s.*; not less than 2*s.* 8*d.*, 20*s.*; 2*s.* 2*d.* and less, 15*s.* per week for ten weeks; the payment being prolonged one week for every six months' membership, twenty-six weeks being the maximum period allowed. In the event of a strike-hand earning less than 33*s.* per week in partial employment, that sum is made up by the society.

Cases of dispute on which the Committee of the Compositors'

Society and Committee of Master Printers' Society do not agree, are submitted to the Arbitration Committee; but if the Compositors' Committee and Master Printers' Committee are unanimous, no further appeal is allowed.

A London Compositor receives not less than 33*s.* per week, working ten hours and a half per day; and if engaged upon a weekly paper, not less than 36*s.* per week.

Since the Edinburgh strike in 1847, and the breaking up of the National Association, there seems to have been no strike of any moment in Scotland in the printing trade. The Scottish Typographical Association has at present Branches in eighteen of the principal towns. The Association minimum rate of wages in Edinburgh and Glasgow is 25*s.* per week of sixty hours for compositors and pressmen; in the provinces the minimum is 20*s.* for sixty hours' labour per week; 3*d.* per hour extra is charged for nightwork after nine P.M. or before six A.M. Time hands are paid overtime on all hours they have worked above sixty per week.

The rates paid for piecework are according to a regular scale of prices mutually accepted by masters and men, and the most cordial understanding seems to exist between employers and employed in Scotland.

During the last two years, a rise in weekly wages and a reduction in the hours of labour per week has been acceded to the men in both Edinburgh and Glasgow; but as piecework is the rule, and a number of the steadiest and most expert workmen are employed at from 26*s.* to 30*s.* per week, there are complaints made by the piece hands of inferior work, idle time, and low wages.

In Glasgow, the piece prices are maximum as well as minimum, no member being allowed to work for more or less than the established rate.

The trade in Edinburgh and Glasgow have recently prepared a new scale of piecework prices, which the masters seem inclined to adopt without finally accepting and acknowledging it as binding upon them.

In Ireland there seems to have been no general union of the Printers' Societies since the dissolution of the National Association.

There are Societies in Dublin, Belfast, Carlow, Clonmel, Cork, Galway, Kilkenny, Londonderry, Limerick, and Wexford, which are recognised by the trade and act in concert with their brethren in England and Scotland.

The Dublin Typographical Provident Society naturally takes the precedence of the other Irish societies.

It is composed of journeymen printers of the city of Dublin, and its objects are the formation of a permanent fund for affording relief to such of its members as may from time to time be out of employment, to assist such as may wish to emigrate, to settle the price of labour, by communication between employers and employed, and promote the general interests of its members.

The weekly subscription is 1*d.* for every 3*s.* earned, 3*s.* per week being maximum subscription.

An unemployed member, who has not lost his situation through any negligence or improper conduct on his part, may receive in weekly payments of 6*s.* the sum of £4 in twelve months, from the first week in May in each year.

Sick members are not entitled to receive this weekly allowance, but 1*s.* in twenty of the weekly receipts is appropriated to a superannuation fund, providing a weekly payment for members incapacitated by old age and bodily infirmity from earning a livelihood. On the decease of a member his representatives are entitled to receive a sum of £3.

A member desiring to emigrate to America or other foreign part (with the intention of there obtaining employment as a printer), and who has paid while in work one hundred and four weeks' subscription, is entitled to receive £6, less any weekly payment he may have received during the year while unemployed; should such payment amount to £4, he remains entitled to £2.

A member proceeding to England or Scotland, having paid fifty-two weeks' subscription, is entitled to £2, less any weekly payments he may have received during the year exceeding £2, but in any case, he is entitled to receive 10*s.*, payable once only within the same twelve months.

The Society allows in book and jobbing offices two apprentices, if two men are permanently employed, three to four men, four to six men, five to nine men, and six to twelve men, or upwards, permanently employed throughout the year.

In newspaper offices two apprentices are allowed, increased to three where the office has been in existence for twelve months, if four men are employed; and if six men are employed four apprentices are allowed, which number is the maximum.

A scale of prices mutually agreed upon by employers and employed in 1829 regulates the rate of wages in Dublin; supplementary rules for newspaper offices, embodying the custom of the trade, were framed in October, 1852.

The working hours are ten per diem, between six, seven, and eight in the morning until the same hour in the evening, two hours being allowed for meals. After eight to ten P.M. 3*d.* per hour extra is charged, and from ten P.M. to six A.M. 6*d.* per hour extra.

Piece workers receive the same extra wages per hour for overtime and nightwork as time workers, in addition to what they earn at piece rates.

In book offices the rate of wages is 30*s.*, and in newspaper offices not less than 32*s.* 6*d.* per week.

The leading unionists in the printing trade seem to be convinced that the interests of masters and men are mutual; and that what tends to the injury of the interests of either, must ultimately prove detrimental to both; and in combining to protect themselves from the unprincipled masters who would take advantage of the isolated position of an individual or a few, aim to regard the permanent interests of the trade as a whole. Large associations, although more powerful for

evil when ruled over by injudicious counsel, exercise, when wisely led, a greater controling power in the circuit under their influence than small ones. A trade united in any extensive union is less likely to fall under the leadership of men fluent in speech but deficient in judgment, and more likely to have within it men of education and ability above the common level, worthy of the trust committed to them by their fellow men. It seems to be generally admitted, that society men in the printing trade are, as a rule, superior both in ability and steadiness to non-society men; and taking non-society men at a lower rate of wages is not by any means equivalent to getting the work done cheaper, especially if quality is a consideration. An employer of about twenty hands in a large provincial town, says, "Some years ago my men became so careless and unruly, that the overseers received a month's notice, and when a fortnight had elapsed, every man and boy (not under indenture) received a fortnight's notice, the whole leaving the premises at one time. Others, non-society men, took their places. They were easily obtained, and paid variously, some *5s.*, *3s.*, and *2s.* each less than the unionists. Their services were retained some three years. I am of opinion that the inferiority of these men, as workmen, more than counterbalanced the difference in wages, although they certainly were a more satisfied and manageable class of persons. About twelve months ago, on the entreaty of the unionists, they were again admitted. By this trial I feel satisfied that the unionists are the better workmen, so far as my particular trade is concerned, and confining my observations to this locality." *

Many masters seem to admit the necessity of limiting the number of apprentices in their offices, as each journeyman can only give thorough instruction to a limited number of boys. The number of apprentices allowed by the Association is probably amply sufficient to supply any demand for their labour that may arise.

The unionists seem to entertain a strong feeling of ill-will against the non-unionists as a body. It is unfortunate that, if the unionists are superior as a body to the non-unionists, they are not above making use of opprobrious epithets in speaking of those who stand aloof from them, frequently not without reason.

No doubt the non-unionists do derive some advantage from the Association in their trade to which they do not contribute, but this does not justify the unionists in committing acts of petty tyranny and intimidation, which are occasionally perpetrated by individuals, not with the authority of the Association or Society, but still without its condemnation. The employer already quoted says, "Unionists have waylaid and made drunk non-unionists in my employ. In one instance, where a man being fully engaged and terms agreed upon, never came to his work, causing inconvenience, and who afterwards told me of the means used in his case."

* Owing to the irregularities complained of by this employer, the Provincial Association refused any strike allowance to these men, with the exception of three or four individuals.

It would be well if the Association could make interference with the work of a non-unionist a finable offence ; and if the members were as particular in reporting and condemning an act of tyranny committed by one of themselves upon a brother, as an approach to an infringement of one of their rules relating to hours of labour, or to the number of boys in the office. In so doing they would only be carrying out the very principle of justice on which their union professes to be based. Probably many who now stand aloof from the Typographical Association might be induced to join if membership involved merely a payment in support of the funds of the Association, and did not bind the individual to the literal observance of rules which, even if, upon the whole judicious, might occasionally be departed from under special circumstances.

If the discretionary power allowed by the Central Executive to each Branch Society, were granted by the Branch Society in the interpretation of its rules to each shop, the members would possess greater liberty, and the masters would not be subject to annoyance arising from a strict adhesion to the letter rather than the spirit of an association rule.

If it is essential to the well-being of the trade as a whole, that the masters should respect the rights of those whose labour they employ; it is also essential to the power and prosperity of unions established to protect those rights, that they should interfere as little as possible with the individual rights of each member.

In connexion with the Typographical Societies in large towns, there are generally Libraries and Institutes, and always an office for the payment of allowances to members of recognised societies on tramp or on strike. In the circulars published monthly by the Provincial Typographical Association, any case of fraud, or attempted imposition, or other unworthiness committed by a member, is published to the entire trade. The Scottish Typographical Association also publish a monthly circular, and a Journal of Typographic Arts is published in London. The following statistics will give some idea of the position of the Typographical Societies in relation to non-unionists throughout the kingdom, and the various rates of wages current in different localities.

STATISTICS OF THE TRADE.

Furnished to the Secretary of the Provincial Typographical Association, January, 1860.

Those towns marked (*) in the Provincial Typographical Association. N. means News, J. Jobbing; W. N. and D. N., Weekly and Daily News.

PLACES.	No. of Offices.		No. of Men Employed.			Men out, or only casually employed.		No. of Apprentices.		Recognised Wages.
			In Society.	Non-Society Men.						
	Fair.	Unfair		Conforming to Prices and Regulations.	Not conforming to ditto.	Society Men.	Non-Society Men.	In Fair Offices.	In Unfair Offices.	
*Aberdare	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	21s.
Aberdeen	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
Arbroath	1	..	5	1	..	..	..	5	..	20s. minimum.
Aylesbury	4	1	12	..	2	..	..	8	5	24s.
Ayr	3	..	12	4	..	..	..	26	..	20s.
*Banbury	5	1	8	..	1	..	..	6	4	24s.
Banff	1	..	9	..	..	..	..	7	..	21s.
Bath	9	..	40	..	..	8	3	37	..	25s.
Birmingham	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
*Blackburn	5	2	11	..	2	3	1	6	5	26s.
Bolton	14	2	15	..	..	4	..	21	6	27s.
*Boston	4	1	9	5	..	..	..	5	4	21s.
*Bradford	16	4	38	2	4	3	..	29	12	24s. j.; 26s. n.
Brighton	6	8	26	5	..	3	1	28	30	29s.
Bristol	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	
*Cardiff	8	2	13	7	2	2	..	12	5	21s. j.; 24s. n.
*Carlisle	9	..	34	3	..	4	..	35	..	21s. to 25s. j.; 25s. n.
Carlow	3	..	9	..	..	..	..	6	..	18s.
*Chester	10	2	17	..	5	17	5	21	4	27s.
*Chesterfield	2	2	5	3	3	..	1	6	..	22s.
Clonmel	2	3	8	2	3	1	5	1	13	21s.
Cork	9	4	41	..	12	2	0	23	23	24s. to 32s.
*Darlington	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	22s.
Devizes	5	..	7	..	..	..	..	17	..	22s. to 30s.
*Doncaster	4	..	19	2	..	..	..	10	..	22s. and 24s.
Dorchester	1	3	14	1	3	..	1	4	8	20s.
Dublin	41	15	253	20	25	120	30	107	135	30s. j.; 32s. 6d. n.
Dumfries	3	2	13	3	1	1	..	16	4	20s.
*Durham	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	23s.
Edinburgh	56	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25s., 26s., 28s., and 32s. 6d. n.
Galway	..	2	7	..	..	..	..	3	9	20s.
Glasgow	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	25s.
Greenock	3	..	9	9	..	..	..	6	..	20s.
Guildford	4	2	16	..	3	3	..	7	2	27s.
*Halifax	9	3	13	9	7	1	..	14	14	24s.
*Hartlepool	5	1	6	2	1	..	1	12	4	24s.
*Hereford	7	2	19	7	1	4	..	12	3	21s. j.; 24s. n.
*Huddersfield	12	2	22	7	..	2	..	26	9	24s. and 26s.
Hull	69	..	79	24	3	11	4	98	..	24s.; 21s. district.
*Kendal	6	..	14	..	..	3	..	13	..	24s.
Kilkenny	3	1	10	..	..	1	..	8	3	20s. to 27s.
Kilmarnock	4	..	7	2	..	..	..	12	..	20s.
Leeds	35	3	132	..	6	31	..	64	..	28s.
Leicester	15	..	25	11	..	1	..	34	..	24s.
Lewes	1	1	18	..	7	1	..	12	15	29s.
Limerick	4	4	20	..	..	1	..	5	20	20s.
*Liverpool	39	21	335	..	..	125	..	54	..	30s.
Macclesfield	4	1	9	4	..	..	..	9	2	24s.
*Maidstone	7	1	7	10	4	1	..	7	9	25s.
*Manchester	56	3	370	..	6	110	..	113	10	30s. to 40s.
*Merthyr-Tydfil	5	..	7	3	..	..	..	6	..	21s.
Montrose	4	..	7	..	6	..	..	23	..	20s.
*Newport	4	3	20	..	5	1	..	8	7	24s.
Northampton	8	..	17	3	..	..	..	16	..	25s.

PLACES.	No. of Offices.		No. of Men Employed.			Men out, or only casually employed.		No. of Apprentices.		Recognised Wages.
			In Society.	Non-Society Men.						
	Fair.	Unfair		Conforming to Prices and Regulations.	Not conforming to ditto.	Society Men.	Non-Society Men.	In Fair Offices.	In Unfair Offices.	
Norwich	12	..	49	17	..	..	4	55	..	21s.
•Nottingham ..	..	..	28	..	..	5	..	..	..	27s.; 32s. d.
•Potteries	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24s.
•Preston	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	27s.
Rochdale	7	2	14	1	1	..	..	3	5	24s.
Rugby	3	1	7	..	..	..	..	2	1	24s.
Scarborough ..	5	..	8	3	..	..	1	5	..	21s.
•Sheffield	25	4	76	2	16	26	..	49	12	28s. j. and w. n.; 33s. d. n.
Shrewsbury ..	10	..	33	3	..	5	1	10	..	21s. j.; 24s. n.
•Stafford	4	1	19	2	..	..	..	6	4	24s. j.; 25s. n.
Stirling	2	..	9	1	..	..	..	16	..	20s.
•Stockton-on-Tees	6	..	3	5	..	..	..	3	..	21s.
•Sunderland ..	5	7	19	3	1	2	1	12	19	24s.
Warwick	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	24s.
Waterford	7	..	16	..	..	1	..	18	..	20s.
Wexford	5	..	12	..	2	..	..	10	..	15s.
•Wigan	6	1	16	4	..	5	..	8	3	27s.
•Wolverhampton .	10	2	34	2	2	2	..	21	unkn.	24s. and 25s.
•Worcester	8	1	28	..	..	..	..	12	..	24s.
•York	16	..	14	50	..	4	12	31	..	24s.

SOME ACCOUNT

OF

THE LONDON CONSOLIDATED

SOCIETY OF BOOKBINDERS.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By T. J. DUNNING,

SECRETARY OF THE BOOKBINDERS' SOCIETY.

This Society took its rise as follows. In 1780, and for some time previously, a society of bookbinders existed, for social and convivial purposes, called the "Friends," which met at the "One Tun," in the Strand. At this time the working day of the bookbinders was from six to eight; which, if two hours for meals be deducted therefrom, leaves twelve clear working hours. There is every reason to believe, from a subsequent strike, that no time for tea was allowed, in which case the working day would be twelve hours and a half. These long hours, it may be easily conceived, when many trades worked from six to six, or from the hour at which they began in the morning to the same hour in the evening, were felt to be an intolerable grievance, and became naturally the subject of conversation at the meetings of this society of "Friends."

The idea of getting off one hour was mooted among this society by a member named Lovejoy, who was the first, or among the very first, to broach it. After a while, in 1785, this contemplated reduction caused another society to be formed at the "Green Man," in Bow Street, called the "Brothers;" and, soon afterwards, a third, at the "Jolly Butchers," Warwick Lane, called the "City Brothers."

These three societies do not appear to have been formed as trades' unions properly so called. The first was instituted merely for the purpose—as the phrase was—of "taking a social pint of porter together." Nor does it appear, until the intention of getting off the hour was formed, that it was used, or intended to be used, for any other purpose than that of "social harmony." The other two were doubtless called into existence by the intention of obtaining the hour; but there is no evidence that they were united as integral parts of one

society. No doubt, as the time approached when they intended to apply for this reduction, they drew together in union, to act in concert, and to get all in the trade to act with them. For this purpose, the "Friends" called, by advertisement in the newspapers, a meeting of all the men in their trade in the metropolis. This meeting, which was held at the "Green Man," Bow Street, was attended by nearly all the journeymen bookbinders in London, when the movement for obtaining the hour was unanimously resolved on; and eventually, committees from each of these societies were organized for that purpose; and it was determined in March, 1786, to apply for the hour at four of the principal shops in the trade, by giving a week's notice to leave if it were refused. It was refused by each of these employers; and what followed will be seen by the following extract from an address to the public published by the men in large placards, and afterwards in the *Morning Herald* of May 9th, 1786.

"Above eighty men have been discharged from their employment, without a minute's notice, only for countenancing a few men in their profession or opinion that thirteen hours per day were sufficient for a day's work in their laborious calling; the stated hours being from six in the morning to eight in the evening, and the usual wages being from 15*s.* to 18*s.* a week, with some few men at a guinea."

The address goes on to state that, not satisfied with this, the employers had caused the men to be repeatedly discharged from other shops; and—women being largely employed in folding and sewing together the sheets of books—"deprived their wives of earning a maintenance;" and had caused "the magistrates to apprehend twenty-four of the men, some of whom had received the usage above related." The address continues:—

"It is their desire at all times to conduct themselves with submission to their superiors, considering themselves in a subordinate state. Nevertheless, they cannot help considering that they are men, and, as such, sensible of the oppression they labour under. They hope none will believe them actuated with motives adverse to the interests of their employers, or linked in combination to obstruct their business; they reprobate every idea repugnant to justice, and ground no claim but on principles of equity." The address concludes by leaving "the innocence of their intention, the justice of their cause, and their whole deportment, to the decision of a candid and unbiased court."

On the other side, the following address was published in the *Morning Chronicle*, April 6th, 1786, by the "Booksellers of the cities of London and Westminster." It stated, that they had heard the complaints of the master bookbinders of the combination entered into to compel them to abridge the usual hours of labour; and, after having carefully considered the reasons assigned by the journeymen, they were of opinion, that the "opposition of the masters was well founded, and the pretences of the workmen groundless." The address concluded as follows:—

"It is, therefore, the determination of the booksellers to give the master bookbinders all the legal support in their power against the

unjustifiable confederacy, by procuring for them every indulgence, in point of time, till their journeymen are brought to a proper sense of their duty and their interest, either by a due consideration of the folly and imprudence of their present conduct, or by the interposition of the laws, which have wisely provided suitable punishments for such offences against order and good government."

It is hoped that the interest to know how a lock-out was carried on seventy-four years ago will excuse these extracts and the subsequent details relating to it. It was on a small scale, there not being at that period more than a hundred bookbinders employed in London; but such as it was, it appears to have been very perfectly carried out.

One of the four shops at which the movement commenced—we say movement, because the intended strike was anticipated by what is now called a lock-out—was that of the before mentioned Mr. Lovejoy, who in the interim had become possessed of capital and had set up in business. His opinion on the subject, however, had undergone during the intervening period a complete change, but his energy had sustained no diminution. As he had been when a journeyman among the most active in inciting the men to get this hour reduced, so he was now the most energetic among the employers in resisting, and inciting others to resist, the application of the men for its reduction. He discharged the whole of his men immediately upon receiving the notice, and, it is highly probable, caused the other masters, who had entered into a combination themselves to oppose the reduction, to do the same.

This combination, however, did not include all the employers, though it did the greater part. Some gave the hour readily when asked for it. These, however, were exceptions.

There was at this period, in the then Buckingham Palace, a room fitted up as a bookbinder's shop; where several men and women were employed, to bind for, and keep in repair, the royal library at St. James's, which George the Third used frequently to visit, to whom, apparently, the various processes used in the binding of books were highly interesting.

His Majesty was the first to give the hour, being requested to do so by his "finisher,"* John Polwarth. Digressing for a moment: as the King often came, clean aprons were always kept to be put on when it was known he was coming, and the men were instructed to proceed with their work when he was there as if no one was present. If he asked any questions, which was not unfrequently the case, they were directed respectfully to answer them to the full, but no more; and to use the word "Sir," instead of any designation of royalty.

The masters who refused the hour formed themselves into a society to resist the reduction, and to prosecute the men for conspiracy; twenty-four of whom were indicted, and held to bail, May 1st, 1786, for this offence. Of these, five were found guilty, as, according to

* Those who work the gold and other ornamental work on the cover, and who "letter" the titles on the backs of the books, are termed "finishers."

the then state of the law, they undoubtedly were. The judge before whom they were tried, said he should not then pass sentence, but leave them until next sessions out on bail; when, if they did not return to their work, he should pass a severe one. They did not return to their work, and the judge kept his word, by sentencing them each to two years' imprisonment in the gaol of Newgate, on the felons' side. It is impossible not to admire the constancy of these men; they knew that a sèvere sentence awaited them if they persisted—and imprisonment of any duration, in the then sanitary state of our prisons, was a punishment involving imminent danger to their health, and perhaps to their lives; indeed, one of their number sunk under it, and died in prison—yet, believing themselves to be in the right, they did persist, in what they believed to be a sacred duty. An amusing incident occurred on this trial. The conduct of Mr. Lovejoy—who was most energetic, as a member of the employers' society, for the prosecution, and as a witness against the men, after his having, as before described, been among the most active when a journeyman in inciting the men to strike for the hour—excited, as may be supposed, the indignation of his former companions; and some of the younger of them sent him a halter in a parcel, with a note requesting him to use it. On the day of trial, while Mr. Lovejoy was, in company with others of the employers, waiting to be examined as a witness, with the halter in his pocket to produce in the court, one of the men, who, though on good terms with the masters, shared in the general indignation, notified to the men's committee, that if they would provide him with a bottle of rum or brandy he would endeavour to get the halter. With this bottle and a glass he made his way to where Mr. Lovejoy was standing, squeezed in beside him, and requested them all to drink, giving this gentleman the bottle and glass to help the other employers; and while so employed, his coat-pocket was relieved of the halter by the man who had so kindly treated the company. The halter was immediately sent to the men's committee, burnt, and a note sent to Mr. (afterwards Lord) Erskine, who, with Mr. Sylvester and Mr. (afterwards Baron) Garrow, was retained for the defence, stating what had been done. When Mr. Lovejoy, who did not appear to have been aware of his loss, was examined, he was requested to produce the halter of which he had spoken so much in his evidence, or, in the words stated to have been used by Mr. Erskine, about which "he had made such a cock and a bull story." He felt first in one pocket and then in the other, in stupid, perhaps half-tipsy amazement at not finding it, to the great merriment of the court, of which Mr. Erskine did not fail to take advantage. There is a tradition, that Judge Ashurst, before whom they were tried—who perhaps guessed how it was,—after this and some other "smart checks," interfered in a most unusual manner against the defendants. Of this, however, as we have not been able to see a report of the trial, the Sessions Papers of 1786 and 1787 having been looked through in vain for it, we can say nothing.

The "lock-out" did not change the original determination of the

men to strike; which, aggravated to great intensity by this prosecution, was kept up most pertinaciously.

The Society was now formed in permanence and in good earnest. Adequate subscriptions were paid by each member, to meet the expenses of the trial, and other trades were solicited for pecuniary aid, which was readily given; the printers being among the most liberal. While in prison, the men were each allowed a guinea a week, and the families of those who had them were allowed the same. Their names were Thomas Armstrong, William Craig, Patrick Lilburn, Thomas Fairbairn, and William Wood; the last named "took fever," and, as before observed, died in prison.

At the liberation of the four who remained, they were each provided with a sum of money, to enable them, if they thought fit, to go into business—as it was not likely they would obtain employment in London as journeymen—which they did, except Mr. Lilburn, who went into the country.

The strike was successful. The men were liberated at the end of about twelve months' confinement, on the 28th of June, through the intervention of Sir Matthew Bloxam, Knt., Sheriff, and stationer; whose attention was drawn to their case by a Mr. Truman, his hairdresser. These particulars are mentioned because the "anniversary" of the liberation of these men, until 1827, formed a part of the constitution of the Society, funds being expressly set apart for an anniversary dinner on the 28th of June to commemorate that event, at which the healths of all the parties were drunk when living, and afterwards, "in solemn silence," their memory received the same honour. As it was necessary that the accounts of the members should be made up, and the money—so much from each—for the "anniversary" set apart for its celebration, the year of the Society was declared to commence on the June night of meeting, which continues to this day; by which this event was further commemorated. These things are mentioned, as they serve to show how deeply such events as those here narrated impress themselves on the minds of working men.

The Society was formed into three lodges, one meeting at the West-end, and the other two in the City; a committeeman from each sitting every Saturday evening at one of the public-houses where a lodge met, to receive members and for other purposes. The lodges met once a month, refreshments being provided from the funds, afterwards by refreshment tickets, usually 5*d.* in value, which were given to those who attended. The entrance fee was 21*s.*, and the monthly contributions for a considerable time did not exceed 1*s.* 8*d.*; they are now, and have been for upwards of forty years, 2*s.* Within the last few years, the admission fee has been 10*s.* 6*d.* to those who join within three months after they have served their apprenticeship.

The "second hour" was obtained in 1794, by mutual agreement, after considerable negotiation. As, in consequence of meeting in public-houses, there was no proper depository for the books of the Society, those of this period, and many others, are lost, so that the exact terms of this arrangement are not known, and, indeed, have been

disputed. Whatever they may have been, the fact is certain, that they only could have been arranged by the men in combination, and from the following article of the rules, "agreed to take place immediately after the anniversary of 1798," it would appear that it was arranged with a combination of employers, and given by them before it was given by the employers generally throughout the trade.

"Seventh. Every employer who gives the last hour, and wages adequate to ability, shall be as equally respected as those who form the Masters' Society."

About this period, 1794, a fourth lodge was formed, and the number of members had increased to 170.

The "half hour" yet remained, which was the subject of a strike in 1806. By many this was thought ill advised, because the half hour was readily given by several employers when asked for; and from the fact that it was clearly the interest of employers to grant it in consequence of much more work being done in a given time *after* tea through the refreshing power of that meal than in the same number of hours *before*. This strike, however, roused their combative spirit, and probably through its being felt to be ill-advised by the men, it was unsuccessful. At the end of about seven weeks the men withdrew from the contest, and, in printed notices addressed to the employers, promised that it should not be the occasion of future difficulty between them. This "half hour," however, was in the course of a few years given by all the employers, as probably it would have been much earlier but for the strike. It is singular that neither Mr. Craig nor Mr. Armstrong, two of the before mentioned defendants, who were then in business, gave the "half hour." This strike cost £451 13*s.* 9*d.*, the whole of which, except £3 1*s.* 0*d.* donations, was defrayed by the Society. Of this, £139 7*s.* 0*d.* were borrowed, which were repaid in 1807.

In 1811, remembering, doubtless, the prosecutions of 1786, the Society maintained an action against Mr. Fraser (Pratt *v.* Fraser), one of the prosecutors of that period, for infringing the statute of 5 Elizabeth, c. 4, s. 31, requiring an apprenticeship of seven years before exercising a trade. This action, upon which a verdict was obtained, was tried June 6th, 1811, before Lord Ellenborough, who observed, "I have no particular zeal for carrying into effect this Act; but my zeal and my anxiety are to do my duty, and to enforce what appears to be the true sense of the Act; which Act, in reference to the business in hand, enforces a penalty of 40*s.* per month for each man so illegally employed. I suppose," addressing Mr. Garrow, the plaintiff's counsel, "there is nothing vindictive in this prosecution: you merely wish to establish the case, and do not sue for the whole penalty?" This being left to his Lordship, under his direction a verdict of 40*s.* was found in each case. Lord Ellenborough, soon afterwards, brought in a bill for the repeal of this Act of Elizabeth, which became law; when he remarked that he was induced to do so by having had to preside at a trial some time previously in which its penalties had been enforced; he thought those penalties wrong, and he brought in

this bill to repeal the Act which enforced them. Did his Lordship allude to this trial?

The Society went on increasing; in 1820 the number of members was 477, when another lodge was formed, making five, three of which were held in the City, and two at the West-end. In this year also, the annual accounts, as audited, were printed; and in 1824 the names of all the members, with the sums paid by each, and arrears, if any, appended to each name, were inserted; to which, in 1844, was added a column indicating when the member joined, and how long he has been a member of the Society. In 1828 the articles of the Society were first printed. Owing to the laws against combinations, by which —previous to 1825, when they were repealed—it and all similar societies were illegal, the articles were written, a copy of them was kept in each lodge box, and read to the members every quarterly night. It was then the practice for each member "to sign the articles," blank leaves being left for that purpose.

In 1826 (number of members 560) a strike took place against a reduction of wages in the shops working for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, which lasted from August to September, when the reduction was acceded to. The cost was about £100. This reduction taking place so soon after the "anniversary," upon which a considerable sum had been expended, led the members seriously to consider whether it was wise to continue so large an annual expenditure for this purpose, to the jeopardy of their present prosperity; and the more, as it was believed that the employers had waited until this had taken place that their success in the proposed reduction might be made more sure. It was, therefore, as an annual celebration from the funds of the Society, discontinued in 1827.

In 1829 a Committee was formed which established the Bookbinders' Pension Society, out of which, in 1837, was formed the Asylum Society, whose almshouses are situate in Balls Pond Road. Both Societies are largely supported by the journeymen in the trade.

Another strike took place in 1832 on the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society. This lasted some months, during which the work in dispute was to a great extent changed in the manner of executing it. Of this strike it may be said, that both parties gained the day, for the masters did not give way to the men, nor the men give way to the masters. Trade being good, the men, for the most part, got into work, and each did without the other, until the mode of doing the work being changed, the cause of the dispute ceased.

In 1839 (number of members 841) a dispute occurred in four of the principal shops of the trade, about the number of apprentices and other matters. The employers had formed an "Association," and being conscious of the power of combination, were, as it appears to the writer, led to act with as much indiscretion as they imputed to their men. Both erred in different directions and on different matters, but both were equally unwise. And, as a necessary consequence, there was no lack on either side of acts of mutual exasperation: which

resulted in the following resolutions of the Employers' Association at a special meeting held at Anderton's Hotel, January 9th, 1839:—

"Resolved, that the members of this Association pledge themselves to discharge from their employment all men who continue to belong to the journeymen's Society (as now illegally constituted) on the 19th of January instant, unless the pending differences be amicably settled in the mean time.

"Resolved, that the above resolution be forthwith printed and affixed in every member's shop."

The men had complained of the members of this Association combining to refuse employment to men who happened to be discharged by any of its members; and upon an instance of this kind taking place at one of the four shops before mentioned, the men refused to work over hours until the grievance was removed. They complained also, that when a deputation of the men waited upon this firm, December 29th, 1838, at its own request, to inform it why they so refused, this firm, upon being informed the cause, namely, the proscription of certain of the men, broke up the conference in anger, and gave notice on the following Saturday to the whole of their men, about ninety in number, to leave their employment, and gave the five men who formed the deputation into custody on an indictment for conspiracy.

Under these circumstances, it was not very likely that the "pending differences" would be "amicably settled," especially as eleven more of the men had been included in an indictment for conspiracy.

In this dispute many of the smaller employers sided with the men. On the other hand, the booksellers, as in 1786, took part with the employers. The number of men discharged by these firms was about 250; and notwithstanding that a very fair opportunity offered itself in February for adjusting the differences, such was the ill-feeling on part of the men, caused chiefly by the prosecutions, that they would not listen to the proposed arrangement. The dispute, therefore, went on until the following September, when both parties, worn out in the contest, agreed, the one to abandon the lock-out and the prosecutions, which had been meanwhile moved by the employers to the court of Queen's Bench, and the other to withdraw the rules concerning apprentices. Thus terminated a dispute which lasted eight months, and which cost altogether nearly £6,000. Of this sum £1,339 0*s.* 7*d.* were obtained by subscriptions and donations from different trades and other sources; the rest, including £1,563 loans from different trade societies and individuals, was paid by the members of the Society. To do which there was a payment of 2*s.* 6*d.* weekly from each member for thirty-nine weeks, of 1*s.* weekly for thirteen weeks, and 6*d.* weekly for thirteen weeks. The whole of the loans were not repaid until 1847. In consequence of the inconvenience during this dispute, and the enormous expense incurred in conducting it, through meeting in public-houses, it was determined in 1840 to consolidate the five lodges into one, to have a permanent secretary, and to have the house of call at a coffee-house, at which the secretary should sit daily from ten to five:

an arrangement by which the facilities for a better understanding of all that relates to a trade society were insured. It is possible, under the best arrangement, that errors may be committed, but they are far less likely to occur with men meeting in the private room of a coffee-house than in the half-intoxicating atmosphere of a public-house; the monthly meetings were also changed from public-houses to an assembly room. There was also an attempt made to amalgamate with the country societies, who had rendered great assistance in the late struggle; this, however, was not attended with success, being after a few months abandoned. Since this period there have been comparatively few disputes, and, excepting the two we are about to mention, none of any magnitude. These two, which were both respecting the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, took the form of controversies in print instead of "strikes." The first occurred in 1842, in which what the men contended for was conceded; the second in 1849 (number of members 679), in which it was contended that the Bible Society was effecting its cheapness in the price of Bibles and Testaments out of the wages of labour, chiefly that of the women's. This was set forth in three publications: the first, entitled an "Appeal" to the Committee and Subscribers of the British and Foreign Bible Society "on the Subject of Cheap Bibles"; the second, an "Address" on the answers given to the "Appeal"; and the third, a "Reply" to the Report of a Sub-Committee of an Auxiliary Society, who answered in behalf of the parent Society. It is not necessary here to go into the merits of this controversy; the result was an amelioration of many of the things complained of, at least for the time. There was, however, an untoward circumstance which arose out of this affair. The women, who had not then seen the "Appeal," were applied to, as they alleged, by the forewoman of the contractress to sign a paper, stating that they had nothing to do with the getting up of the "Appeal," which being undoubtedly true, many of them readily signed, without having the paper read to them. When the signatures were obtained, they were told by the forewoman of its contents, which were as follows:

"22 August, 1848.

"From the women employed at Mr. (Miss) Watkin's establishment, to show that they are perfectly satisfied with the work and prices paid for all the Society work.

"Signed in the presence of Mrs. Lewis."

To this they instantly demurred, and insisted upon its withdrawal, which was not at that time acceded to. This paper was believed by them intended to be sent to the Bible Society as an answer to the statements in the "Appeal." Meanwhile the women had obtained some copies of the "Appeal," and they who had signed it refused to work until it was returned. It was, however, after a day or two, though with some reluctance, returned to them. In the excitement and recrimination attendant upon such a circumstance occurring with upwards of a hundred women, who were at that time employed by the contractress for this work, they, against the advice of the committee

of the men's Society, entered into a strike against the grievances mentioned in the "Appeal," which much complicated the matter. These publications were addressed and sent by post to the members of the Bible Society, it being hoped that they would not continue to enforce a cheapness which, it was alleged, could only be brought about by trenching upon the wages chiefly of the women's labour employed thereon. And it was argued in them, that however desirable it might be to have Bibles and religious publications produced cheaply, it did not become religious societies, whose very existence depended on the charitable donations of the pious, to contend in the market, and to avail themselves, with the work-people employed in producing these books, of all the means which would be, and are, used by a "cutting" dealer to undersell his rivals in the market.

An event followed this controversy, the last we shall have to record, which was unexpected. For a long time previous, there had been manifested a strong desire on part of a minority in the Society to return to meeting in public-houses. It was urged that the same numbers did not attend the monthly meetings of the Society as when they were drawn together by the drinking tickets,—which was undoubtedly correct; but it was altogether forgotten by those who urged this objection, that the members, who heretofore could only pay their money by attending the monthly meetings, that being the only time and place in which it could be paid, now could, if they pleased, pay it weekly without attending the monthly meeting at all; and still more, that although it was true that the attendances at these meetings were larger when in public-houses, yet in many instances, from the evils arising out of the means of excitement and of intoxication being present, their decisions showed that they had in this way better have not met at all. There was also discontent at the "anniversary" being discontinued.

In consequence, from time to time there were resolutions brought before the Society to return to the old system of public-house management, which were always negatived. To enjoy this "sociality," as it was called, certain of the "finishers," who also thought their interests were not sufficiently attended to, formed themselves into an "association," which example was followed by some of the "forwarders."* These two associations gave the means and facilities, though certainly not intended by many of their members, of embarrassing the "management" of the Society. Shortly previous to this controversy, and after it had commenced, this party had moved for a return to the old system of public-house meetings, the decision to be taken by ballot, and were apparently confident of success. The "Appeal" appeared a few days before the ballot was taken; when the higher position taken by the Society in this controversy, and its manifest superiority over any mode of "striking," or indeed any means that had been before employed by it to support the interests of those who belonged to the

* A "forwarder" is the workman who binds the book before it is "finished" by having the "lettering" and ornamental work added thereto.

working portion of the trade, which could only have taken place under the present mode of conducting its affairs, were thought by this party to be the cause of the result of this ballot being against them. The majority however was not very large. The "Finishers'" Association had published for some time previously a Quarterly Circular, which, except in its violence, was highly creditable to them, and which had been used as a means of attacking the "management" of the Society, chiefly on account of its opposition to meeting in public-houses. It was now used to attack the statements of the Society made in the "Appeal," by impugning the motives that led to their publication, and insinuating that the statements themselves were untrue. The Secretary, who was the writer of the "Appeal," upon this, declared to the Society, that unless these charges were repudiated by the members who belonged to this Association, either he must cease to be their secretary, or they must quit the Society. The Society decided in favour of the latter alternative, and required this repudiation in writing, or expulsion. And although the far greater number of this association were entirely ignorant of what their Circular contained until they saw it in print, and disapproved of it when they did see it, they refused the alternative offered by the Society, and were expelled.

It was an error to require the repudiation in writing—it was too much like signing a "document."

These being joined by most of the members of the Forwarders' Association and others, formed themselves into a society called the "Dayworkers," confining the support in disputes for wages to "dayworkers" alone. "Piece workers" might join, but they would receive no support in any dispute respecting wages. This Society held its meetings and house of call in public-houses, in the old style, and was soon joined by those who preferred that mode of conducting the business of a trade society. The celebration of the "anniversary" on the 28th of June was also made a part, as heretofore, of the constitution of this Society.

It should be noticed, that when this Society was formed, the *Finishers' Circular*, the cause of the rupture which took place, was discontinued, as were also the "Forwarders'" and the "Finishers'" Associations. Although a retrograde movement, and as such to be deplored, yet it is certain, from the increase hitherto of that Society, that drinking usages have yet, though much less than formerly, a strong hold on the working classes. But on the other hand, it cannot be doubted that the influence of these usages is gradually declining.

In October, 1850, a publication entitled the *Bookbinders' Trade Circular* was first issued, "to furnish information on the various subjects connected with the trade," which appears once in two months, and which continues to the present time. There was, however, October 18th, 1855, a proposition brought forward to discontinue its publication, which was negatived.

The benefits of the Society are the right to receive 8*s*. 6*d*. a week when out of work, for ten weeks;

To apply for a petition when sick, that is, to receive 6*d.* from each member;

And to receive support in the event of any dispute, supposing that the proceedings of the members relating thereto have received the sanction of the committee.

The allowance to men out of employ was not given for many years after the Society was established, which would indicate that many men were not at that time unemployed. Its amount was at first 7*s.* per week, and was received for an unlimited number of weeks, commencing when a certain number—which varied at different times, in 1820 it was fifteen—were out of employ. In 1828 it was limited to ten weeks for each, without requiring any specific number to be out before its payment commenced. In 1855 it was raised to its present amount (8*s.* 6*d.*) for the same number of weeks.

Previous to December, 1856, petitions used to be voluntary contributions from each shop, which used to be collected by two persons to each district appointed for that purpose.

There are also six pensioners, two at 3*s.* a week and four at 2*s.* 6*d.* Amount paid to unemployed members for the last eight years was £3,339 4*s.* 6*d.*; in disputes on wages, prices, &c., for the same period, £103 0*s.* 10*d.*; for the sick by petition in the same time, £1,528 9*s.* 6*d.*; and to the library £10 a year is applied for the purchase of books. This library, which for some time was the only one connected with a trade society, was commenced in 1847, by the binding up of the periodicals with which the house of call was supplied, it now consists of about 1,800 volumes.

The number at present on the books of the Society is 634, on the books of the Dayworkers' Society 357, total 991.

The differences alluded to which caused the separation are now forgotten; indeed, the changes of ten years have reduced the original seceders to a very small minority; the great majority now of that Society having joined since that event. Although apart, there is not the smallest doubt, should occasion require it, that both would unite and act the same as if they never had been separated.

Such are the principal events of the Bookbinders' Consolidated Society; and if the narration be thought long and imperfect, it should be remembered that it embraces a period of seventy-four years, and that it is largely compiled, not from the books of the Society, many of which are lost, but from various sources, almost all detached, though, it is hoped and believed, trustworthy.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

STRIKE OF THE FLINT GLASS MAKERS

IN 1858-59.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By GODFREY LUSHINGTON,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

[The materials for this account, except the documents quoted, have been furnished exclusively from the side of the operatives: and consist mainly in placards and notices issued *during* the struggle. On application to the Chairman of the Association of Master Glass Manufacturers for information, it was courteously declined, on the (perfectly tenable) ground, that at the close of hostilities it seemed inexpedient to revive the particulars of the contest.]

The United Flint Glass Makers' Society was established in 1844: since that time, according to their own representations, their aggregate expenditure—in the support of unemployed men, in payment to superannuated members, and in expenses incurred for the removal of men and their families to distant situations—has amounted to £20,000 and upwards, of which £2000 were spent in the two years of the Crimean war, although there was no strike, owing to the fluctuation of the trade, and £3000 in 1858, the year of the Indian mutiny. In the course of these fifteen years, the Union, on the occasion of the different strikes, assisted the Wolverhampton tin-plate workers, the Kidderminster carpet workers, the Preston and Wigan lock-outs, the silk-skein dyers of Manchester, the shipwrights and joiners in their law case; paid its share of the expenses incurred by the National Trades' Association in their endeavours to pass the several arbitration bills brought before the House of Commons; and also took part in various local disputes.

In June, 1858, the rules and regulations of the Flint Glass Makers' Friendly Society were revised at a conference held in London.

The minimum rate of wages was fixed by rule 63, for servitors 24*s.* per week and 2*s.* per move; for footmakers 18*s.* per week and 1*s.* 6*d.* per move; for journeymen footmakers, 14*s.*

As to apprentices, rule 45 prescribed—

"That no more that one apprentice should be allowed to three chairs, two to five, and so on in proportion, and every one put on should be bound an apprentice. Also, that no journeyman footmaker might be discharged to make room for an apprentice."

It was with respect to these two rules that the disputes leading to the strike arose.

The strike began in the Stourbridge district, but afterwards became general.

Early in October, 1858, the manager of a factory proposed that one of the apprentices (or rather one of the yearly-bound lads) should be taken on as a journeyman footblower at something less than 14*s.* per week. The men objected, and on the refusal of the employer to raise the wages to this sum, the men, in accordance with the decision of the district, on October 12th, gave fourteen days' notice to leave. The employer in his turn gave the men another notice, dated October 16th, and they all left on the 23rd October.

The other dispute arose at another factory in the neighbourhood. At that factory there were, early in November, four apprentices to nine chairs, *i.e.* one apprentice beyond the number prescribed by rule 45 of the Union. The proprietors proposed to take on another, a fifth, apprentice; and when the men and district refused to agree to this, gave notice to all the men "that they would not fill any more metal, unless the men consented for the lad to be put on." This notice expired on October 23rd.

Thus the men in two factories, amounting to about fifty, were out. But it was impossible that the war should be localized within these limits for any length of time. The two parties could not be left to fight it out till one should capitulate to the other, or until either the particular masters should get new men, or the men new masters. The cause of this lay in the existence of the Union; for by its laws the Union was bound not only to supply the men out on strike, according to their position, with 15*s.* or 10*s.* per week, but also to prevent any of its members taking employment under the masters whose men were on strike. In other words, by the Union all the operatives were permanently combined into an offensive and defensive alliance. It was otherwise with the masters: they were not formally combined at all. The brother masters of the two masters whose men were on strike were under no obligation either to contribute to their support or even not to receive their discharged workmen. Thus these two firms, unless they were ready to contend single-handed against the whole Union, found it necessary by some direct step to procure external aid. Accordingly they issued the two following circulars.

"—— Glass Works,
"October 16, 1858.

"In consequence of our refusal to submit to the dictation of the glass makers in our employ, the undermentioned have signified their intention of not recommencing work until we comply with their demands; we shall feel obliged by your not employing them, as it is the interest of the trade generally to support us in resisting such tyrannical proceedings.

"We are,
"Yours respectfully
"X. Y.

"workmen.	servitors.	foot makers.
"A. B. &c.	C. D. &c.	E. F. &c."

"—— Glass Works,
"Stourbridge, October 16, 1858.

"The following men, having formed a combination to stop our glass works and

dictate their own rules, have all been discharged by us, and we shall be obliged by your not employing them, and feel sure that it is the interest of the glass trade to support us. Our glass cutters are all men unconnected with the Union, and we mean to adopt the same course with the glass makers.

"Z. and Co.

"WORKMEN.	SERVITORS.	FOOTBLOWERS.
"A. B. &c.	C. D. &c.	E. F. &c."

The circulars apparently produced the desired effect: not only were the discharged men not taken on at other factories, but early in November, when the two firms,—from their glassblowers being away on strike,—began to run short of plain goods for their glass cutters to work up, various other masters came forward to supply them with these goods for this purpose at cost price, or at all events at less than the market price.

This assistance, it seems to me, was necessary for the two firms to ask, and reasonable for their brother masters to give: it was simply a temporary adoption by the masters for their mutual protection of the same principles of combination as those which the men enforced for their protection in the permanent organization of their Union. Nevertheless, it gave great offence to the men: they called it "unjustifiable interference;" and on November 15th the Stourbridge District Committee issued a circular containing the following passage:—

"Before bringing the whole district out in a general strike, we propose that two of the most vulnerable and unreasonable aggressors in this district shall be served with fourteen days' notice from each of their men *first*, and it is also proposed that every other factory then working shall be limited to six turns per week, and if that answers the effect—very good; but if the remaining masters still maintain their hostility to us, and determine to make the others work, we then propose to take two or three more, until the whole district are out on strike, which we have not the slightest doubt will answer the effect in a very short time."

The circular closed with the formal proposition by the Stourbridge District—

"That the Central Committee and the Stourbridge District shall be allowed to take what measures they shall think best and most expedient in the present struggle, and that, *should it be necessary*, they shall be allowed to draw out two or more factories, or the whole of the district, on strike, and shall receive the allowance stated in rule 19."

On the following day, November 16, the Central Committee ratified the proposition.

The glass manufacturers now thought it time to organize their forces.

On the same day, November 16, they issued a circular, which contained the result of sundry previous meetings held with a view to the formation of an association of the glass masters in the districts of Birmingham, Stourbridge and Dudley. The circular was moderate in its tone, and set forth the rules of the new association as follows.

RULES.

NAME.

That the Association be called the Midland Association of Flint Glass Manufacturers.

OBJECT.

The intent and object of the Association is the defence of the members against

any unjust interference (more especially in the form of strikes) on the part of the men employed, either of their own movement, or in concert or combination with others, for the purpose of coercing their employers.

FUNDS.

Each member of the Association shall subscribe £100, to be called the "Defence Fund," and also a further sum of £10 as an annual subscription, payable quarterly in advance.

OFFICERS.

The officers of the Association shall consist of a chairman, a paid secretary, treasurer, and a committee of five members, to be elected annually; and no member of the committee going out of office shall be re-eligible till after the expiration of another year. The chairman to be *ex-officio* a member of the committee.

MEETINGS.

The committee shall meet monthly, or so often as occasion may require: and a general meeting of the Association shall be held quarterly.

PROCEEDINGS.

Each member of the Association shall immediately communicate any serious misunderstanding between himself and his workmen to the secretary, who shall, after fully investigating the same, call the committee together to consider what proceedings shall be taken, before referring to a general meeting.

SUPPORT OF MEMBERS WHEN WORKS ARE STANDING THROUGH A STRIKE.

In the event of a strike on the part of the men in the employment of any member of the Association, the other members undertake to supply him with plain goods, if required, and at such prices as shall be settled by the committee: and also an amount of compensation during the strike, as shall be determined at a general meeting, shall be allowed.

EMPLOYMENT OF FRESH HANDS.

No member of this Association shall take into his employ a new hand in any capacity, as a glassblower, without a written character from his last employer: nor shall he treat with one, unless the man offering shall have previously given to his then employer a fortnight's notice of his intention to leave. And in making an engagement with a new hand, it should be stipulated in writing that a fortnight's notice shall be given on either side, either of leaving or dismissal, excepting in case of dismissal from gross misconduct.

GENERAL EMPLOYMENT OF LABOUR.

All employment of labour shall be thoroughly at the option of each individual member of the Association.

PRIVILEGES RESTRICTED TO MEMBERS.

All privileges to be derived from the Association shall be exclusively confined to its members.

FORFEITURE OF PRIVILEGES.

Any member of the Association who shall fail to comply with the rules, shall forfeit all claim to support from the Association: and the whole amount of his subscription, whether annual or in the defence fund, shall be entirely at the disposal of the Association, and subject to the decision of a general meeting specially convened.

COMMUNICATION WITH OTHER DISTRICTS.

Frequent and free communication shall be encouraged between this and other associations formed upon the same principles, and having the same objects, so as to invite and obtain mutual co-operation.

GEORGE LLOYD, *Chairman.*
WILLIAM WALKER, *Treasurer.*
GEORGE JOS. GREEN, *Secretary.*

November 16*t* , 1858.

Accompanying this circular was a paper headed "The Real Cause of

the Strike, or Extracts from the Rules and Regulations of the Flint Glass Makers' Society." The paper is given at full length *infra*, p. 110.

The next step appears to have been taken by the men, at a general meeting of the Glassmakers' Union, held at the Town Hall, Stourbridge, on December 4th, at which were present delegates from Birmingham, Manchester, Dudley, and York, and, amongst other resolutions, one was proposed and carried as follows:—

"No factory in the Stourbridge, Dudley or Birmingham Districts shall be allowed to make more than six turns per week, where there is any real or suspicious evidence that they are making, or unless they promise us not to make, the work of other masters, whose men are out on strike; and if this does not answer the desired effect, the four other places in the Stourbridge District shall give in their fourteen days' notice to leave."

The struggle now was general between the men's Union on one side and the masters' Association on the other. The latter at once took most active and hostile steps, and by common agreement was bent upon nothing short of the extinction of the Union. *Delenda est Carthago.* By common agreement, all masters who lived in the Midland Counties locked out their operatives, and not content with this, they sent deputations to Yorkshire, Northumberland, Lancashire, Scotland, to induce the employers there to lock their factories up. The result was, that on the 1st January, 1859, in the Stourbridge, Birmingham, and Dudley Districts, the masters had locked out the men, in number exceeding 500, from seventeen factories, and only seven factories were left working in the two first mentioned districts.

In March there were out about 1,100 workmen, including glass cutters, in Stourbridge, Dudley, Birmingham, Manchester, York, Glasgow, London, Newcastle, St. Helens, Warrington, Edinburgh, Wordsley, and Belfast.

The condition of re-employment held out by the Midland Association was the following declaration to be presented for signature by the operatives.

"In re-entering your employment, we agree to give up the Glass Makers' Society, as now constituted; we declare we will not interfere with your management or right to employ labour as may be required by you in your works, nor contribute funds to any society that shall have this effect, so long as we remain in your employment."

On the other hand, the men showed great determination in defence of their Union. Already at the general meeting held at Stourbridge on December 4th, 1858, they had resolved to leave untouched the £1000, part of their capital, lying in the Bank at Birmingham, and to double their usual contribution, *i.e.* to raise it from 1*s.* to 2*s.* per week from every workman or servitor. But at the end of December they found it necessary to raise the contribution as high as 5*s.* per week. This resolution was passed at a conference of the United Flint Glass Makers' Society, held on December 31, 1858, and January 1, 1859, at Birmingham, at which were present delegates from Stourbridge, Birmingham, Dublin, Dudley, Edinburgh, Glasgow, London, Longport, Manchester, Newcastle, St. Helen's, Warrington, York, and Rotherham. The Con-

ference also approved of a project for forming amongst the men a Joint Stock Company (Limited) for the manufacture of flint glass. This project had been proposed about the end of December, and efforts were made to raise a capital of £5000 by 500 shares of £10 each. Nothing however seems to have come of it.

But the Conference, while thus prepared to defend their Union against the masters, and even, if possible, to do without masters altogether, were at the same time ready to adopt conciliatory measures. They resolved to appoint a Committee "to modify, concentrate, and revise the rules objected to, and take out the obnoxious language, without forfeiting the spirit or compromising the honour of the Society, and a deputation to meet the masters on January 9, 1859."

What these modifications were will best appear by examining together the rules before and after the change :—

EXTRACTS FROM RULES AND REGULATIONS OF THE FLINT GLASS MAKERS' FRIENDLY SOCIETY, REVISED AT A CONFERENCE HELD IN LONDON, JUNE 15-19, 1858. (*Circulated by the Masters as "The Real Cause of the Strike."*)

Part of Rule 2.—That apprentices be allowed to join the Society when they have two years of their time to serve.

Part of Rule 5.—The central secretary shall likewise keep a roll or list of the unemployed, with their respective abilities and the situations they are capable of filling, and when applied to by any of the district secretaries for a man or men, he shall send the man or men that have been longest on his list capable of filling the situations they are required for.

Part of Rule 6.—When a man or men are wanted in any district, the factory secretary shall apply to the district secretary, and should there be no one suitable in the district, he shall immediately write to the central secretary, stating clearly the station the man required is to fill, also the abilities required of the man, and the wages he shall receive, so that there be no mistake in the man sent for to fill the situation.

Rule 9.—A list or roll of the unemployed of each district shall be kept by the district secretary, who shall supply the man required in his own district, the longest on the roll having the first claim; should there be none on the district roll, or none qualified to fill the situation, the district secretary shall write to the central secretary, who shall supply the men required.

Rule 32.—Any member applying to any employer or manager without getting the consent of the district secretary,

RULES AS MODIFIED AT THE CONFERENCE HELD AT BIRMINGHAM, ON DECEMBER 31, 1858, AND JANUARY 1, 1860.

Rule 2.—To stand with note added —that the rule is entirely permissive, and not compulsory upon apprentices.

Rules 5, 6, and 9.—The central secretary shall keep a list of the unemployed, so that when application is made for a man or men he may be able to supply them; all applications to be made through the district secretary, but any employer may have any member he prefers by letting the secretary know whom he particularly desires to have; but all privileges to be derived from this Society shall be exclusively confined to its members.

Rule 32.—No member of this Society shall take a situation to the detriment of the interest of the Society, or he shall

and of the men in the factory where the man is wanted, shall be fined £1, and not allowed to work if he gets the situation; any man writing for or giving information to another, or applying to either manager or employer, without getting the consent of the district secretary and of the men in the factory where the application is for, shall be fined £1, and suspended from all benefit till such fine be paid. Any servitor or footmaker applying to be put on without the consent of the men in the factory where he works and of the district, shall be fined £1, and not allowed to work if he gets the situation. Districts to have power to increase these fines, but not to exceed £5. Any member not being satisfied with the decision shall have power of appealing to the central committee, whose decision shall be binding.

Rule 45.—That no more than one apprentice be allowed to three chairs, two to five, and so on in proportion, and every one put on shall be bound an apprentice.

Note.—No journeyman footmaker must be discharged to make room for an apprentice.

Rule 46.—That all members of the factory shall be consulted, and their consent given, before taking on a young footmaker; any member infringing this rule shall be fined £1, and not allowed to have the apprentice. Any boy being a taker-in shall not be bound an apprentice.

Rule 47.—That no premium shall be received by any member of this Society for taking on an apprentice, under any consideration whatever, or the whole of such money shall be forfeited to the district local fund, but that one move per week be allowed to the chair for twelve months.

Rule 49.—Any district shall have power to make such bye-laws as they may think proper, so that they do not infringe on the general laws of this Society.

Rule 62.—That in future no fifth hand be allowed to the blowing chairs. Any one violating this rule shall be fined not less than £1, nor more than £5, and not allowed to keep the fifth hand, and be suspended from all benefit till he pays the fine.

forfeit all claims to benefit from this Society.

Rule 45.—That no more than one apprentice be allowed to three chairs, two to five, and so on in proportion, but if no journeyman can be obtained, two apprentices shall be allowed to four chairs.

Note.—Any member infringing this rule shall be fined £1, and that all allowances for young footmakers be regulated by the employer and the men in the district.

Rules 46, 47, and 62, struck out.

Rule 63.—That no servitor be put on to work under 24*s.* per week and 2*s.* per move, and no footmaker be put to serve under 18*s.* per week and 1*s.* 6*d.* per move.	Rule 63.—That the old standard rule of wages in the trade be adopted; *i.e.* that the lowest wages of journeymen be, for workmen 22*s.* per week, for servitors 16*s.* 6*d.* per week, and for footmakers 12*s.* per week.

A copy of the rules thus modified was sent to every employer in the country, but at first met with no response: the lock-out was as strict as ever, except under the condition of the men renouncing the Union. But in the course of a few weeks the masters found, on the one hand, the pressure on themselves increasing, since not only their glassblowers on strike, but their glass cutters also, who depended upon the glassblowers for a supply of work, were out of employ, and, on the other, the Union as determined as at first: they therefore began to think of terms, and accordingly, at a meeting held on March 3rd, 1859, adopted, as the basis upon which they would receive back their workmen, the following resolution:

"It having been reported that several of the men in the different manufactories desire to adopt a certain code of rules dated January 29, 1859, and drawn up by ——, resolved—

"That this meeting sees no objection to their adoption by the men with such a modification of rules 4 and 5 and the abrogation of rule 20 as may leave the employment of labour free to the employer: and these rules being so modified by the Glass Makers' Society, and the same duly notified to the chairman of the Associations, that the works be re-opened on the 14th inst.

"Resolved, that on and after the 21st inst., each manufacturer shall be individually at liberty to treat with his own men on the basis of the above resolution."

Based upon the foregoing resolutions, the following declaration was drawn up for each master to submit to the men returning to work.

"I, A. B., engage to enter the employment of Messrs. C. D. and Co. upon the full and faithful understanding that from henceforth I will not attempt, by myself or through others, to interfere with your freedom in the management of your works, more especially in reference to the engagement of men, or the number of apprentices whom you choose to employ. Declared in the presence of E. F., witness, as accepted by C. D."

The men refused to entertain any bond or declaration, but were ready to re-consider their own rules, and, accordingly, at a meeting of delegates, representing the Glass Makers' Society, from Stourbridge, Birmingham, Manchester, Warrington and other places, held on March 11th at the Woodman Inn, Deritend, Birmingham, the following resolutions were adopted.

1.—That the rules drawn up by Mr. —— and accepted by the trade be now confirmed with the following explanation. Rules 4 and 5 are not intended to compel a master to employ or retain any man who is incompetent to fill the situation required: and any master may have any member he prefers by telling the secretary or any of his men whom he desires to have.

2.—That rule 20 be altered *only* as to the *allowances* given for the young footmakers—such allowances to be decided by the masters and men in each district.

3.—That as Mr. ——'s men, of Birmingham, Messrs. ——'s and ——'s, and Messrs. ——'s men, of Warrington, have commenced work upon these conditions, all negotiations for resuming work be on the same basis only.

These terms were found, under the circumstances, to be satisfactory

to the masters, and eventually, at a conference held at Dudley, April 4, 1859, between the Midland Association of Glass Manufacturers and a deputation of the Glass Makers' Friendly Society, the code of laws as revised by the Glass Makers' Society was agreed to by both parties, subject to the following modifications :—

"The note to rules 4 and 5 to read as follows :—These rules are not intended to compel a master to engage any man to whom he objects, or who is incompetent to fill the situation required, and any master may have any member he prefers by letting the Secretary or any of his men know whom he desires to have."

An assurance was given by the employers present that no objection would be made in receiving again the men lately in their employ, on any grounds, in reference to the part the members of the Committee or any other officers of the Society may have taken in the disputes which were then declared to have terminated.

It was distinctly stated, that "if masters engaged a non-society man the society men should object to work with him, and that our Society will support men for so doing."

The men then returned to their work.

The cost of this strike has now to be estimated, and the means of defraying it explained. Under the rules of the Union, the allowance during non-employment on account of strike or otherwise, was

To workmen or servitors ... ... 15*s.* per week.
To footmakers ... ... 10*s.* do.;

and throughout the whole of this struggle—and for some weeks there were 1,100 out on strike—the Union did not condescend to lower this allowance ; but after the 8th of January, 1859, the payments were made two-thirds in cash and one-third in paper, in the shape of a promissory note, given in the name of the Society, payable with 5 per cent. per annum as soon as practicable after the strike should be over. Many of these promissory notes were privately discounted by those amongst the operatives who were better to do than their neighbours. At the close of the struggle in April, 1859, there were out about £2000 of these promissory notes.

To meet this total expenditure, the Union had in hand £500 in the Glasgow Bank, and £1000 at Birmingham ; this latter sum they left untouched as long as they could, but the weekly contributions were doubled, and finally quintupled, as appears from the following table :—

Usual levies per week.		By Resolution, Dec. 4th, 1858.		After Jan. 8th, 1859, till one month after April 16th, 1859, or after resumption of work.		For a period of six months after the lapse of one month after close of strike or resumption of work.	
s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
Workman or Servitor ... 1	0	2	0	5	0	2	0
Footmaker ... 0	8	1	4	3	4	1	4
Apprentice ... 0	4	0	8	1	8	0	8

Summary.

1. The cause of the strike was the disregard by two firms of the regulations of the Union imposing a minimum wage and restricting the number of apprentices.

2. The strike by a natural sequence propagated itself over the whole district, the Union striking in detail against those firms who supplied material to the other firms where the men were already on strike.

3. This series of strikes led to the formation of a Masters' Association, and to a general lock-out of the operatives throughout the United Kingdom, with the avowed object of extinguishing the Union.

4. The dispute, after a duration of several months, terminated by a compromise offered by the operatives and accepted by the masters: the basis of the compromise being that the men should withdraw, or qualify, the rules which were practically obnoxious, without abandoning the principle on which those rules were framed.

5. The Union survived the general lock-out conducted by an organized Association of Masters.

REPORT

ON

TRADES' SOCIETIES' RULES.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By G. SHAW LEFEVRE.

The printed rules and regulations of fifty-nine trades' societies and unions have been procured by us, and though these form but a small portion of the whole number existing in the country, they are sufficiently numerous to enable us to form a judgment as to the general scope and bearing of such societies.

It has been found that the societies range themselves under two heads—viz. those which are formed for trade purposes only, and those which combine with the general objects of a trade society those of a benefit and friendly club. There are some societies where these two objects are kept distinct, and their rules separate:—it has been found most convenient to range these under the former head.

Tables have been drawn up under these two heads, giving such information as to the contributions, allowances, and objects of the societies as can be given in a tabulated form.

Of the (forty) societies which are formed mainly for trade purposes, it will be found the allowances given to those on strike or out of work by order of the union, vary from 7*s.* a week to 12*s.*, and in one case (the Ship Joiners of Liverpool) as high as 36*s.*

Of the (nineteen) societies which combine benefit purposes with those of trade regulations, the entrance money varies from 2*s.* 6*d.* to £1 1*s.*, while the weekly contribution varies from 2*d.* to 1*s.* The allowances for sickness and want of work vary from 5*s.* to 10*s.*, and on strike from 10*s.* to 15*s.* a week. Funeral allowances from £3 to £12, with allowances in some cases for accidents and superannuation, and for other special purposes.

The greater number of these trade and benefit societies are of a purely local nature, and confined to the members of particular trades within a limited district; the most important exceptions to this being in the cases of the Stone Masons, the Bricklayers, Carpenters and Joiners, the Plasterers, the Smiths, the Coachmakers, the Amalgamated Engineers, the Coopers, the Typographers, Steam Engine Makers, Iron Founders, and the Seamen's Protection Society; these consti-

tute the wealthiest and most widely spread societies whose rules we have before us. They have their branches or lodges spread over the country, and subject to the rules of the general society, settled by a delegate meeting, and with a central authority which directs and controls the general business of the society, either directly or through various local branches.

It will be well to give a short account of the objects, as expressed in their rules, and the organization of some of these principal societies, as an example, and then proceed to point out any striking difference in others.

The Operative Masons' Society has 213 branches in England and Wales. Its objects, as expressed in its preface, are as follows. "It is the great principle of this Society to bring into practice among its members the truly valuable object of a self-protecting power against the selfish and unprincipled proceedings of the capitalist; and although objections are sometimes raised against 'trade societies,' and charges made that they are monoplies, and unjust restrictions, yet those who experience the great benefits they confer can fully appreciate their general usefulness. Every artisan following a given occupation has an interest, in common with all those similarly engaged, in forming rules by which that particular trade should be regulated; and the constitution thus set up is available for the assistance of the unemployed, the support of the sick and disabled members," &c. "Its objects are to mutually support each other while in search of employment, and also in case of sickness or accidents, and for the interment of deceased members; as also to regulate the price and lessen the hours of labour."

The Society is governed by a central committee, of chairman, vice-chairman, and nine members, elected by the central lodge for six months; the central lodge is chosen by vote of all the lodges, and not to remain more than three years in one town; each lodge has power to make its own bye-laws, but not in opposition to the general laws; all lodges are to transmit to the central committee all monies not immediately required for the disbursements of their local expenditure.

The power of the central committee appears to be administrative only, separate lodges having power to decide by vote upon any question immediately affecting them, with a power of investigation to the central committee, by sending delegates to inquire into its nature.

The Society is confined to those who are members of the trade, after a legal apprenticeship of five years, and no boys are to be bound as apprentices after sixteen years of age, except they are sons of masons, when eighteen is the limit of age.

Among the rules we find the following,

"Working overtime tending to our general injury, by keeping members out of employment, shall be abolished, excepting in the case of accident or necessity, but no strike to take place for the abolition thereof without a special grant. Where members persist in working

overtime in opposition to the lodge of which they are members, they shall be fined at the discretion of the lodge. A lessening of the hours of labour would prove a great remedy for the wrongs we suffer, and may each member speedily perceive how deeply he is interested in its attainment. It is also requested that lodges harassed by piecework or sub-contracting do apply at a reasonable time for a grant to abolish it. Where sub-contracting or piecework are abolished, such is binding with the Society."

"That an annual revised black list be printed, showing the names of those who have worked in opposition on strikes or otherwise, also the names of those who have defrauded the Society."

"When a strike for an advance of wages is contemplated by any lodge, the secretary is to report the same to the central committee, showing the number that would be out, the number of payable members, the state of trade, and the position of the Society in the neighbourhood, also the number of members belonging to such lodge that voted for and against the application being made. The secretary to summon each member of the lodge who may reside within three miles of the lodge-house to discuss the application—votes to be taken by ballot, majority to be binding—no proxies allowed."

"If any employer attempt to reduce the current rate of wages at any period of the year, or attempt to introduce piecework where it has been abolished, or to increase the hours of labour, or infringe upon the established meal hours, or introducing individuals not of the trade, or on the refusal of paying or non-members to contribute to the Society, members may resist such infringements without a grant, if acceded to by a majority of the members of the lodge; but in all cases to wait on employers previous to striking."

The Society of Bricklayers is of a somewhat similar nature, but its rules are not so strict, and they are wholly confined to trade purposes.

The Society of House Carpenters and Joiners, another of the Building Trades, is also widely spread through the country, and has its seat of government at Nottingham; it is purely a trade society, and its rules are mostly confined to directions for the general government of the Society, leaving the details to the separate lodges. No strike is a legal one without the consent of a majority of the lodges, to all of whom information of any movement must be sent, and notice of any new privilege cannot be given to the employers until the sanction of the lodges has been obtained. And further, no lodge is allowed to strike for any new privileges at a time when the members already on strike exceed one for every fifty throughout the Society; but should any employer think proper to make a reduction of wages, members so dealt with may appeal to their respective lodges, who may act as the circumstances of the case may direct. No lodge is allowed to strike for an advance of wages until they have been twelve months sharing the general expenses of the Society, and no lodge is allowed to vote on its own question if for a new privilege.

The Coachmakers is another Society extending throughout the country, with 120 branches, and 3,650 members. A member must have served seven years as apprentice in a coachmaker's shop, and is admitted by a majority on a ballot. One of the rules is to this effect, "That our employers be requested not to take more than one apprentice to each branch, unless they employ more than three men at such branch, and then only at the average of one apprentice to three men employed (sons of coachmakers excepted). When an apprentice is in his last year, another may be taken to succeed him. Should any attempt be made to violate this rule, a deputation of two or more members of the town in which the grievance exists shall wait on the employer; and should they fail to come to an amicable arrangement, the secretary shall represent the case fully to the executive committee, who shall deal with it according to the rules."

The general business of the Society is directed by an executive committee of seven members, resident in the central town, elected at a general meeting, and to receive £1 each per quarter, to meet twice a week, and with power to refer any important question to the general vote of the Society.

On the subject of strikes there are the following rules. "No shop or town shall be allowed to turn out on their own responsibility, but in the event of any oppression or dispute, the secretary of such town, in conjunction with the members, shall furnish the executive committee with all the particulars of such grievance, who shall determine whether it be expedient to summon delegates, and if found necessary to do so, the executive committee shall send one delegate, and the town secretary where the grievance takes place shall summon one delegate from each of the two nearest relieving towns; should the delegates fail to settle the matter amicably, they shall represent the case to the executive committee, who shall determine whether it be necessary to call the men out or not; and if two grievances at once, the executive committee shall decide which shall have the preference, and when it is practicable, only one strike be allowed to take place at one time."

"Any member leaving a situation rather than submit to a reduction of wages, or losing his situation through a black going to work in the shop under wages, shall be entitled to immediate support out of the funds of the Society."

"That this Society discountenance piecework altogether, and call on the members to abolish it, where it is practicable to do so. That no overtime be allowed in any shop where there are more than three men in a branch, if there be a man of the same branch out of work in the town."

"In the event of a turn-out taking place, a levy shall be laid by the executive upon every member of the Society, in proportion to the wages of each man, and the men on strike shall be paid three-fourths their regular wages. When the funds exceed £1,500, the surplus shall be applied to strike purposes."

"Reports to be published of the blacks."

The Society of Amalgamated Engineers is of a similar character. Its preface, in many respects the same as that of the "Masons," contains the following passage: "Our object is not to do anything either indiscreet or illegal; but if constrained to make restrictions against the admission into our trade of those who have not earned a right by a probationary servitude, we do so knowing that such encroachments are productive of evil, and, when persevered in unchecked, result in reducing the condition of the artisan to that of the unskilled labourer, and confer no permanent advantage on those admitted. It is our duty then, to exercise the same care and watchfulness over that in which we have a vested interest as the physician does who holds a diploma, and the author who is protected by a copyright." "By association we acquire the discipline which allows us to act together, and the patience which enables us to wait for results." "We may hope then to leave to a future generation not only a trade, but the means of conserving its best interests, until some more general principles of co-operation shall be acknowledged in society, guaranteeing to every member the full enjoyment of the produce of his labour."

The Society, which has branches throughout the United Kingdom, and is one of the wealthiest societies in existence, is governed by an Executive Council of twenty-five members, elected from specified branches, and there is an appeal to this council from decisions of the branches, and a power given to it to take the opinion of the members of the Society generally when a majority of votes is to decide. The rules as to admission are very strict. The proposed member must have worked five years at the trade, and must be possessed of good abilities as a workman, be of steady habits and good moral character. There are provisions for calling a delegate meeting once a year to decide on matters connected with the trade, and there are provisions for aiding emigration of members when the funds of the Society are £3 per member and when 7½ per cent. of the members are out of employment.

But there are no special rules for strikes.

The Smiths' Society appears to us especially to be worthy of notice. The preface to its rules states, that among the objects to which its funds are to be applied is, "To advance the interests of the operatives of the trade generally, both in a pecuniary and in a moral sense of view, by every legal means within its reach, and to resist aggression in whatever shape it may present itself as an antagonist to its members or to the trade at large,"—but further on it states, "that the Society had an early origin (1827), and, like most of its kind, became imbrued with and indulged more or less in the category of strikes, which expensive item, in all probability, tended more than anything else to repress and to reduce its funds and its members to a very low ebb. In the year 1845 a delegate meeting assembled, at which it was unanimously considered and determined, that strikes of all kinds, however seemingly just in their nature, were in the aggregate an unpremeditated evil on the part of the operatives, and an unmitigated one to all concerned—in fact, an infliction upon society at large—the immediate enactors being the proximate sufferers in

all cases, the ultimatum of which was beyond calculation. At this meeting it was most wisely determined, for the future, to avoid all such contests, and in furtherance of the same, a law was enacted, and thus this Society became incorporated, in point of fact, as the original anti-strike society, a fact (although put forth, perhaps, a little before its time, and which may in some respects have militated against the society), yet a fact of which we have no cause to be ashamed; a fact which in the short space of eight years has nearly trebled the number of our members, and has enabled us to meet every demand honourably, which certainly was at one time rather doubtful, and above all, has put us, in a pecuniary sense of the word, in such position that perhaps no other society of the kind can boast of. So much for anti-strike principles. Want of intelligence on the part of both man and master induces and precipitates strikes. They are battles between the employers and the employed which are too often unwisely got up by one or both parties, and continued more for the purpose of trying which shall gain the mastery over the other than otherwise, at no trifling sacrifice both to themselves and to the public at large; when a small spice of intelligence would convince both that it is impossible for the wages of labour or its concomitants to be permanently regulated by individual action. Disputes of this kind can only be settled by friendly consultations between both master and man, imbued with the spirit of mutually imparting facts, with a view to render assistance to each other; if this, in connexion with the efforts of mutual and disinterested friends, cannot be accomplished, we say then let men and masters part; offer no opposition; the men, however great or small their number, to be supplied with means of existence until they obtain other situations of work from the funds of the Society; and the employers to obtain other men as best they may; and we contend that this unassuming quiet plan of operations, is, according to its number of members, accomplishing, and will continue to accomplish, infinitely more real good to the trade, in all its ramifications, at a minimum expense to its members, than any other plan of operation by any other society, however much vaunted or boasted of, and therefore deserves to be well supported by the operatives of the trade in general.

"The history of strikes in the aggregate confirms the opinion that they are a serious evil to all concerned and to the public in general; the right to combine is one to which the artisan, operative as well as employer, are fully entitled. Combinations are capable of producing great advantage, and supply important deficiencies; the labour of the operative is his capital, and he is justified in disposing of it to the greatest advantage, and protecting it from injury or depreciation; but he is justified in no more; he must stop there; he has no right to assail or interfere with others; the moment this line is transgressed by either master or man, that moment a complete change is effected in the character and operation of the body; from a positive good it becomes a positive evil.

"This institution differs from others in another most important

point; its principles are to associate all the different branches of the trade in one general and universal compact, objecting to none; it considers none inferior or ineligible who can earn their living at any of the branches of the trade, and as such it breathes a truly liberal spirit, and is not exclusive in principle, as all other branch societies of the trade more or less are."

Among the rules are the following:

"No member to be allowed to enter into any employment except he receive the average wages of such employment.

"The board of directors have power to investigate any disagreement case, and if they see fit, may throw members so situate upon the regular trade fund resources, and thus put an end to the disagreement.

"That this order deprecate and discountenance all strikes or turnouts of whatever nature."

Power is given to the board of directors, in conjunction with a majority of the members of the order, to make an extra levy sufficient to support members unemployed through disagreement with their employers.

The Society of Steam Engine Makers is one of ancient foundation and wide extension. It embraces the objects of a benefit club as well as those of a trade club. It was instituted in 1824 for the purpose of supporting and protecting such persons as had a legal claim to the trade, its funds being for the first nine years devoted entirely to trade purposes. Candidates for admission must have served a legal apprenticeship of not less than five years, or have worked as journeymen for five years. Branch meetings are held every month, and the executive council meet quarterly; the latter has power to suspend or expel any member who may be acting contrary to the laws and interests of the Society. There are no special rules relating to strikes.

The Flint Glass Makers' Society is also a national one; its rules are brief and do not give much insight into its working; in the last report attached to the rules we find the following:—"It being an acknowledged principle that the success of our Society depends upon limiting as near as possible the supply of men to the demand for them, we had our attention directed to what occurs in some districts, which materially affects this principle. We understand that in some districts boys are put to blow foot, and are not bound apprentices, and when they learn they leave their places and take the place of journeymen-footmakers; thus making journeymen in two or three years when others are compelled to serve three years; we think that this evil might very easily be put an end to, and therefore recommend to those districts where it exists to see that the boys are bound when they are put to blow foot.

"The most important idea entertained by the trade is co-operation; or a plan to employ the otherwise unemployed members of our Society in glass manufactories worked by our surplus funds; this certainly is a bold idea, and the idea alone is indicative of progress by its aim;

but we fear that you are aiming at what has not had sufficient consideration to be carried out with success; we would, therefore, not advise you to lose sight of the idea, but to wait until a practical plan be laid before you, which may appear likely to carry it out with success; for this we have offered a prize of two guineas for the best practical plan for carrying out the principle of co-operation."

And among the minutes of a conference held at Glasgow in 1855:

"That the conference agree with the principle of co-operation; but owing to the present unsatisfactory state of the law of partnership, think it would be dangerous to adopt this principle at present.

"That the executive be empowered to take measures for the purpose of getting our rules certified; such of our rules as may be legally objected to, to be published as general bye-laws, such bye-laws to receive the signature of every member in the Society."

Among the rules to be noticed are the following:—

"Any member applying to an employer or manager without getting the consent of the men, shall be fined one pound, and not be allowed to work if he gets the situation.

"Any member losing his situation by drinking or neglect of duty shall be suspended from unemployed allowances for six weeks for the first offence, twelve weeks for the second offence, and for the third offence he shall be expelled the Society."

Similar rules to these two are adopted by the Machine Printers' Society, in addition to the following, which are worthy of notice:—

"No journeyman shall hire himself to his employer for a fixed time without consulting his district.

"No apprentice shall be allowed to leave his situation on his own account until he has served seven years, without consent of his district."

"One apprentice allowed to two journeymen in each shop, and should any master put more, the journeymen in the shop shall acquaint the secretary, who shall call a meeting of the neighbouring shops, at which at least eleven journeymen shall be present; and if the majority deem it advisable to oppose the master, the secretary shall inform the corresponding secretary, who shall call a special delegate meeting of all the districts; the decision of which shall be law, and no turn-out shall be lawful or supported unless previously supported by a delegate meeting.

"Any member submitting to an abatement of wages for spoiled work shall be excluded; but shall, if he leave work for refusing to submit to abatement, receive 10*s.* per week. That any member allowing any of his helpers to pitch his rollers, wet or set or put in doctors, &c., shall be fined 5*s.*, for second offence 10*s.*, and for third offence shall be excluded."

The objects of the General Society of Plasterers are defined as follows. "To protect the interests of our trade by every legal means within our reach; to create an amicable and friendly understanding amongst operative plasterers; likewise to maintain a fair rate of wages, and ultimately to reduce the hours of labour to a standard suitable alike to summer and winter; also to protect ourselves against the vast influx

of boys and men who are not plasterers, who are introduced into our trade by selfish and unprincipled speculators in our labour, in a wild endeavour to compete with and undersell each other; heedless of its ruinous effects upon us and the trade in general."

The Society is governed by a central committee, composed of a delegate from each district, but all matters of importance are referred by them to the districts, and the votes of the members taken thereon, when the majority is binding, and voting by proxy is not allowed.

Among the rules the following are worthy of notice:—

"That if at any time a dispute should arise between the employers and the employed, in the endeavour on the part of any member to carry out the object of this Society, such member to communicate it to the secretary of his district, who, if the district committee deems it of importance, shall communicate it to the general secretary, with a copy of resolutions founded thereon; the general secretary shall send copies of the same to all the districts, who in return shall transmit to the general secretary the number for or against it, and the majority to be declared binding.

"Any member having a charge against another must present it in writing to the secretary of the district to which he belongs, and also deposit 2*s.* 6*d.* The secretary to summon the accuser and accused before the district committee, who shall examine the charge, and if the accusation be declared frivolous, or the accuser be not present to substantiate the charge, he shall forfeit the deposit and pay expenses.

"Should any member by age, accident, or infirmity, be rendered incapable of earning the standard rate of wages per day, he shall be allowed to make the best agreement he can with his employer, providing he makes it known to the secretary in the locality to which he belongs the first meeting night after the agreement; but in the event of any infringement on the trade of which the Society disapprove he shall act in accordance with its wishes."

In the rules of the Bookbinders there is little affecting the relation of the members and their employers; they are generally concerned with benefit purposes and regulations for securing employment for members out of work. Among its rules, the following is worthy of notice.

"Should any member working piecework leave his work unfinished, upon such circumstance being reported to the committee, they finding the statement to be correct, shall pay the full value of the work so left to the employer, and place the same to the member's arrears, with a fine of ten shillings, which if not paid within three months he shall be erased."

This Society has established a monthly journal "for the purpose of advocating the rights and privileges of the trade," and it has also a library for the use of its members.

In the case of the Coopers' Society, which is a purely trade union, with branches throughout the country, there are only two rules which are worthy of notice, viz.

"That in case of a strike arising with any Society in connexion

with the Association, other towns being busy to take as many men as they can conveniently to relieve the town on strike, and also any Society in want of men at any time shall first apply to the various Societies amalgamated before any other town.

"That no private correspondence be allowed by the members with regard to procuring work, but in all cases must apply to the proper officers of the Societies."

The Machine Workers' is also a national society; but there is nothing in its rules which particularly affects the relations of the members to their employers.

The Typographical Association is also a national one, the preface to its rules contains the following observations:—

"That union is strength is an axiom now universally admitted and extensively adopted. From the highest ruling powers down to the very humblest ranks of society, the necessity of combined action for the attainment of any given object has of late years become more and more apparent; and whether it be the defence of the privileges of a weakly sovereign from the assumptions of a more powerful neighbour, or the maintenance of the rights of labour in opposition to the encroachments of aggrandising capital, the first step to be taken to insure success is the formation of a strong bond of unity amongst the parties connected with and interested in the movement. . . . The learned professions have their restrictions and their prohibitions, their penalties and exclusions, for the avowed purpose of fixing a limit to their numbers, and securing a certain dignity to their order. Manufacturers and other employers of labour have also discovered the advantages of united, in place of isolated action; and numberless unions of these parties have resulted in various parts of the country. But it is chiefly amongst the working classes that the salutary effects of combination, guided by reason and conducted with prudence and moderation, have been experienced and appreciated; and the members of our own 'gentle craft' have not been insensible to its beneficial influences. Through its potent agency the rate of remuneration for our labour has been generally sustained, despite the pressure of a reckless and ruinous competition amongst employers; whilst in some cases an advance on previous terms has been obtained. We have also been enabled in some degree to check the undue increase of our body consequent upon the introduction into the trade of an unlimited number of apprentices, though our ranks unfortunately still furnish a melancholy disproportion to the existing demand. Our efforts in this direction have been somewhat marred, and our means circumscribed, by the want of co-operation in those very districts where the great evil of boy-labour is most extensively practised; and strenuous exertions are about to be used by delegation or otherwise, with a view to illumine the darkness of those benighted regions."

Among the rules with this view are to be found as follows. "That no office be deemed worthy of imitation where there are a greater number of apprentices than two, unless four journeymen have been

regularly employed for six months, when the number may be increased to three, but on no account to have more."

"That no new establishment for a weekly or other newspaper, or jobbing office, be allowed to take more than one apprentice until such paper or jobbing office shall have been in existence twelve months."

"That no newspaper or other publication shall be 'farmed,' and any member offering to bring out any publication under the established price-scale of the town shall be expelled the Association."

"That no member of this Association who shall hold a permanent situation shall be permitted to work for any other master than the one by whom he is engaged, when any member connected with this body is out of employment, or when any other fair and honourable printer can be employed."

"That fifty-nine hours per week be the maximum of working time for established wages. The remuneration for overtime and Sunday work to be left to local regulation."

A monthly circular is published by the Society, in which the names of employers who do not accede to the terms of the Society are printed.

The Sheffield Typographical Society is a branch of the above, and has among its additional rules, the following.

"That when a boy is introduced into an office to take part in the business, it shall be ascertained whether he is intended to be bound; and if not, he shall not be allowed to work; and if it is found that the boy is to be bound to the business, he shall be allowed to work two months, but no longer, previous to the indenture being ratified.

"That the wages of the town be twenty-eight shillings per week, and that fifty-nine hours' labour per week be the standard for the members, and if required to labour a greater number of hours, sixpence per hour shall be paid for such overtime. Daily news hands to be paid *5s.* more per week than the ordinary 'stab. of the town for fifty-nine hours' labour, and sevenpence per hour for all hours above that number. If required to work after ten o'clock in the evening or before five in the morning threepence per hour extra to be charged, and if employed on the Sunday, the mode of charge to be the same as for nightwork. A month's notice to be given and required.

"That if persons engaged on established wages be required to change to permanent piecework prices, or *vice versâ*, a fortnight's notice to that effect shall be given by the employer to the employed previous to such change.

"That persons called in to assist in any office connected with this Society shall not be paid less than half a day's wages."

The Seamen's United Protection Society is a national society, but apparently confined to the coal trade.

The objects, as stated in the preface to its rules, are worthy of notice :—

"When the war ended in 1815, the Government, without the least consideration for those who had battled on the ocean in defence of their king and country, disbanded the fleets, and cast adrift some

thousands of seamen suddenly, to find employment in the merchant service. Wages in consequence fell. From the year 1815, seamen, as a class, though increasing in numbers and intelligence, were sinking yearly in value. Wages were always falling, never rising. Wages in the coasting trade had sunk from £10 to £2 15*s.* per voyage. The sailor's labour was not paid in proportion to the danger incurred and work performed. Had the constant fall in wages gone on, there was a prospect of seamen sailing ships for their mere food. To disgrace the British flag and to degrade the character of the merchant service it was seriously proposed to turn all the young thieves out of the gaols and pay owners a small premium to apprentice them. Then again it was proposed by the Admiralty to pension off 5000 naval seamen and to force them into the home coasting trade and form a naval reserve. This insane attempt to drive the regular seaman from the home trade was abandoned when the scheme was properly exposed.

"In 1850 the Mercantile Marine Act awakened seamen to a full sense of their rights and wrongs, and taught them to appreciate their marketable price. This Act was intended to compel all seamen to go before a shipping master on shipment, and discharge and pay 1*s.* each time, however short the voyage. The Act contained also clauses of an oppressive character. The Legislature, prompted by crotchetty enthusiasts, every year brought forth some new and crude measures interfering with owners and seamen. The seamen of most ports agitated for the repeal of the Act of 1850, and in 1851 the union was formed. From that time a change for the better has been inaugurated. The seamen have had the satisfaction of seeing register tickets, or seamen's passports, abolished; fixed payment to the merchant seamen's fund has gone the same road; coal whipping by seamen in the Thames has received its death blow; the coasting trade has been relieved from the officiousness of a shipping master and the shilling imposition; small stores or payment instead has been allowed; wages have risen, so have freights; ships sailed by members of the Society are better manned; and lastly, improvements in the law have helped slightly to ameliorate the condition of seamen as a class. These social, legal, and physical rights have been gained without injury to the owners. In many instances owners have expressed themselves heartily pleased with the struggle made by seamen in the advancement of their interests. It now rests with the members to follow up so good a beginning, to stick to the Society through good and bad repute, and use every legitimate means to urge upon the Legislature the necessity of giving to seamen increased protection against being compelled to go to sea in unseaworthy ships."

The rules of this Society contain the most strict regulations as to the rate of wages, with tables for the rates to and from the various ports of England and the Continent, and the following appear to be specially worthy of notice.

"No member shall work, whip, or discharge coals at any creek, quay, or wharf, in the port of London or the river Thames; nor at any hulk, the Gravesend Canal, or Lobster Wharf, such work being an

unjust interference with the labour of men who get their living by such work. And no member shall work coals at byports with less than four hands up and four down on board of any vessel shipping or putting out either by the voyage or by average thirteen sacks of coals and upwards."

"That no member of this Society sail in any ship from the N. E. ports, or from other ports where branch societies exist, unless the crew are all members of this Society, apprentices excepted; and in order to prevent any party contention on shipboard regarding membership it is desired that each member shall produce his medal previous to signing articles.

"If a strike takes place for wages or other grievances in any port where the seamen are in union, and the owners or masters of such ports apply to any other port for seamen, each member pledges himself not to go and man the ship of such owner or master to the injury of the seamen so unshipped.

"In order to discourage irregular strikes, no cessation from work in any port shall take place without a regular convened delegate meeting. At such delegate meeting all the facts of the case shall be laid before the delegates, and such delegates shall decide whether it be prudent that a strike should take place, whether it shall be general or local, and what assistance shall be given."

"That, if any *bonâ fide* member has been seriously imposed upon by the master or owner of the ship in which he has been employed, the said member shall lay his case clearly in writing before the secretary and committee of the port where the ship may happen to be; and if the complaint be such as to induce the committee to procure legal advice, any expense arising from such suit shall be repaid out of the funds of the local society to which he belongs to the branch advancing the money for such purpose. But if it appears in the examination that the committee have been imposed upon by a misrepresentation of his case, or the member has withheld any information so as to mislead the secretary or committee, the member himself shall bear all the expenses incurred.

"In all cases of appeal the expenses shall be borne equally between all branches.

"No member to sign articles to forfeit his wages, or any portion of his wages, during the time a vessel may be frozen up in the Baltic or elsewhere.

"That wages in colliers by run be two-thirds of a voyage; one pound less than the voyage for run ships, and steamers ten shillings more than the half voyage.

"That the wages in screw colliers be *25s.* per week, with provision found till further notice. Crew to be all members of Society."

The Sunderland Seamen's Society is a branch of the above society, and incorporates its rules. Among the additional rules are the following:—

"No member will be allowed to assemble on the river Wear, the quays or docks in a tumultuous or riotous manner, or to stop or detain

any ship or vessel on any pretence, or to take the crew of any ship or vessel out of her against their own consent.

"Members sailing by the voyage in vessels to Hamburg are requested to pay attention to this rule. After the arrival of the vessel at Hamburg, and no cargo having been discharged for three or four days, it is requested that members work no more cargo per day than the ship is chartered for per day without being paid for the extra labour they have to perform by such detention.

"That all carpenters be permitted to sail in any vessel without contributing towards the funds of this Society, provided such carpenters are members of their own society. Should any sea going carpenter not be permitted to enter the Shipwrights' Society, he will be obliged to become a member of the Seamen's Society.

"Should members of the Seamen's Society have to leave a vessel for wages, the carpenters must leave also.

"That no mate or seaman do any shipwright work or caulk in ports in the river Wear, and that no carpenter act as carpenter and mate on board of any ship at the same time."

The Wear Shipwrights' Society has adopted the following among its rules :—

"If any member shall take any piecework, or solicit for any, where a branch of this Society exists, he shall be fined £1, and other members working at the same yard shall call a meeting, who shall decide what steps to take.

"Any member commencing work in the morning previous to the usual time of starting, or leaving the yard before five P.M. when caulking, shall be fined 2*s.* 6*d.*, and that all men be found six running wedges. If the men be removed from one side of the vessel to the other, they will be entitled to double wedge money.

"That if any member takes his tail-end wedge out of the seam, or commence another before all hands are ready, he shall be fined.

"That no labourer be allowed to carry any material, make stages, or assist to lay ways or any other portion of shipwright work.

"In caulking an old vessel, 80 feet to be considered a day's work.

"When working at a vessel on a Sunday, every man to receive double pay; and if working at a vessel on the strand on a Sunday, and she comes off on that day, four tides to be charged for the tide she comes off.

"That when from home above the prescribed distance, men to be paid for a day's work for the Sunday, but not to work."

The Lancashire Amalgamated Power-Loom Weavers is an important Society. Its objects are stated to be, "To keep up our present rate of wages to the standard list, and to be able to resist any attempts to reduce the same, and also to prevent one employer paying less than another for the same amount and quality of work, and more particularly to bring up the prices of those who are paying the lowest rate of wages, also the redressing of any grievances between the employers and employed."

It is governed by a committee, consisting of one representative to

every 700 members, who have power to object to or approve of strikes when other means to settle disputed matters fail ; one-third of this committee constitutes a quorum, and shall be unanimous in all its resolutions unless there be present a majority of its members.

As to disputes, it is provided that, "if the members of this Society in any mill or shop should have a reduction of prices offered them, or should the imposition of any rule or regulation be attempted that is calculated to curtail the earning of those members, or render their situations unnecessarily uncomfortable ; or should the prices be already so low as to justify an advance, the members of each mill shall make a full statement in writing of their grievances, to be called a 'Bill of Grievances,' and they shall lay it before the district committee, who after investigation shall take such steps as shall amicably arrange the matter between the employer and the employed. But if this be found impossible without encroaching on the wages and privileges of its members, then the district committee shall direct its secretary to send a copy of the bill of grievances to the general secretary, who shall forward a copy of it to the committee of every district with summons calling a meeting of the executive committee.

"Should the central executive committee resolve that the members of the mill from which the bill emanates shall strike, the said members shall be authorized to give a legal notice to their employer that they intend to leave his employ, and if arrangements be not come to, the said members shall leave their work, and be entitled to support from this Association, and each district shall pay towards the support of such strike in proportion to the number of its members."

The Chain and Trace Makers' Society is of a similar nature, and is established in the iron district about Stourbridge. The preface to its rules states as follows :—

"It is obvious that fast as the chain trade has extended within the last few years, chain masters and chain makers have multiplied still faster. The result has been, that many masters have had to compete with each other in the market. Orders have frequently been scarce, and consequently of the many masters some of them at times had but few, if any; those masters who would execute them at the lowest price had them, and they again generally gave them to those workmen who would work cheapest; this continual barter, together with disunion and feelings of jealousy towards each other among the workmen, allowed the masters to give us for our labour almost what they chose, both with regard to quality and kind. Hence, while some few masters paid us a miserable low price, which, though nominally the same, was in reality much less, being paid in goods, and sometimes very inferior goods charged for much higher than the market price."

Among the rules are as follows :—

"That the Association be called the Chain and Trace Makers' Anti-Truck and Price Protective Association, and that its prominent objects be to unite all chain and trace makers, with a view to secure a reasonable remuneration for their labour, and utterly to destroy (at

least as far as the trade is concerned) the payment of wages in goods instead of money.

"No member shall work for any master who trucks any of his workmen."

"That every master shall give, and every member demand, a similar price for a similar quantity of work. If any member be detected working under price or receiving truck he shall be fined 5*s*., and should he persist in so acting, all others who make chains or traces shall desist from working for his employer till such member be discharged.

"All those who were regularly at work at the trade when the Union was first formed to be admitted, but that none who may begin after that time, except the wives and children of chain makers, or such as may become apprenticed according to rule, be admitted.

"That the female members of this Association, who marry workmen of other trades, shall not teach their husbands, nor their children while their husbands live, nor shall they have any apprentice.

"No member to be allowed to make finishing work, or prepare tools for any persons not recognised as masters.

"That the trade be divided into districts; and collectors, if they discover any person at work, who has not a proper title to the trade, shall report the same to the general meeting."

The Lace Makers' Society of Nottingham have the following passage in their address:—

"There is a reciprocal relation between master and man, which, if rightly understood and properly acted upon, will tend to the welfare of both, for their interests are identical, and lie in the same channel, and the wealth that flows for the benefit of one should flow for the benefit of the other, and the operative receive his fair ratio of the capital which he has been the means of providing. Let us not be misunderstood, we wish not to dictate either to master or man, but to leave the one in the full exercise of those privileges which, as a capitalist, he has a right to enjoy, and the other free and unfettered, and at perfect liberty to dispose of his labour under whatever circumstances or in whatever manner he may find most convenient to his interest and his feelings.

"We might enlarge further upon the necessity of a union between master and man, not only to keep up a reasonable price for the workman, but to enable the master to get a fair remuneration for that serious outlay of capital which is required in our branch of business, but which he will not be enabled to do if unprincipled individuals are allowed to take so unnecessary an advantage of the redundancy of labour in a bad trade, and bate his hands to enable him to force a sale of his goods, and consequently compel other individuals to do the same.

"The value of capital is consequently reduced, and so serious is the reduction becoming, that many of the masters coincide with the men joining the present Union—on the success of which mainly depends our creditable position in society."

The rules of this Society are not otherwise worthy of remark; much is left to the discretion of the executive committee.

In the address of the Saw Makers of Sheffield we find as follows:—

"The apprentice question demands your most serious consideration. For years a great portion of your funds has been spent in endeavouring to stop the tide of mischief that has flowed on, almost unchecked, through the gross injustice we have suffered in not having (like almost all other trades), to some extent, the control of the apprentices. It is admitted on all sides, that it requires more than the average amount of close application, combined with natural talent, to make what is termed a skilful saw maker. How necessary, then, it is that the apprentices should be under the tuition of acknowledged good workmen in every factory, no matter whether they are working for the benefit of master or workman. How is it then there are so many unskilled workmen in the trade? Simply because, on the one hand, manufacturers of cheap goods, who at all favourable opportunities continue to introduce numbers of boys into the trade, for no other purpose than to undersell their more respectable neighbours. Not content with a generous competition, they are heedless as to the means employed, provided the end is gained; thus perpetuating a double evil—namely, an inferior class of goods is brought under the market, and the boys, being left without that supervision and instruction which is necessary to insure good workmen, are turned loose upon the world, unfit to go into a first class shop. The question then is, how can this evil be remedied? The most feasible plan appears to be, to endeavour to cultivate a good feeling between the employer and employed, and, if possible, put an end to all ground of dispute by settling the question amicably amongst themselves. If this fail, then, and not till then, would a strike for the attainment of the object be justifiable. . . . It is desirable that unity of action should be the watchword of all; for a working man to act individually in the protection of his labour is to prefer the strength of one to that of many. Every manufacturing town in England will prove the fact, that just as a trade has been united or disunited so have the wages been maintained or reduced; and as the experience of every trade has shown that union is the only safeguard of labour, so it is by union that the interests of the mercantile and professional portions of the community are cemented; hence arise the Chambers of Commerce, the Inns and Courts of Law, and an innumerable host of other societies. How important, then, that labour should have the same privileges that are so freely granted to capital. Put aside, then, your petty differences, and unite in one bond of brotherhood; and as coercion is the opposite of conviction, moral means must be used to advance the interests of our order."

In accordance with the above is the following rule, "Manufacturers are to have one boy to every four men permanently employed."

The Railway Spring Makers' Society address their members to the following effect. "Considering that the trade whereby we live is our property, bought by certain years of servitude, which give us a

vested right, and that we have a sole and exclusive claim upon it, as all will have hereafter who purchase it by the same means, such being the case, it is evident that it is every man's duty to protect by all fair and legal means the property whereby he lives, being always equally careful not to trespass on the rights of others. . . . In order to establish right feeling and good understanding among us, and that the rights of the employer and the employed may be equally protected, we conjointly resolve to be governed by the following rules, never losing sight of our motto, 'United to support but not to injure.'"

Among the rules to be noticed are the following :—"The entrance money for qualified persons (connected with the trade and working at the same) to be £1. Should there at any time be a scarcity of hands, and strangers unconnected with the trade have to be brought in, they shall pay £3 as entrance money, and shall not be entitled to any benefits until twelve months after the whole of their entrance fee has been paid."

"That there be a committee of arbitration appointed, consisting of president, secretary, and nine of the most judicious members of the Society, to whom shall be referred all disputes arising between masters and men, so that they may, if possible, be settled in an amicable manner."

The Factory Operatives' Society of Coventry addresses its members as follows :—

"The Association having been established more than seven years, has rendered great assistance to its members, as it has been the means of putting down many acts of tyranny and oppression, such as illegal stoppages of wages, dismissal from employment without proper notice, and maintaining the Acts of Parliament made for the protection of those working in factories. It has had a tendency to raise wages, cause a better feeling and organization among factory workers, and raised them in the scale of social society." There are rules to meet the emergency of strikes, but no trade regulations.

The Morocco Leather Finishers' Society of London has the following among its rules.

"As this institution is founded upon principles calculated for the relief of men who are dependent on those placed in more affluent circumstances, and on whom their principal dependence for the support of themselves and families rests, we therefore wish and trust, that none will apply for admission who are not seriously disposed to study the true interest of their employers, and to pay them that respect which their situation demands and their conduct justifies, at the same time do protect and relieve their fellow-workmen in the hour of difficulty and distress."

The Upholsterers of Liverpool have among them rules as follows.

"Any member procuring work directly or indirectly for any other upholsterer than one of this Association when there is one on the bar book, shall be summoned before the committee and fined two shillings and sixpence.

"No member shall receive less than twenty-eight shillings per week.

"That no member work more than fourteen days with a non-member, but should such a one come to work in any shop, the members shall give notice thereof to the standing committee, who shall appoint a member to wait on and solicit him to join this Association."

And the following we take from the rules of the Tin Plate Workers of Glasgow.

"That no member be allowed to engage with an employer so as to prevent his leaving him after two weeks' notice has been given.

"Any journeymen not connected with the Society commencing to work in shops where all the men are members of the Society, must become members by the first monthly night following, as it is believed that there are few men who have any serious objections towards the Society, and as it is considered that this is necessary for the purpose of carrying out the objects of the trade.

"Should any member after the decision of a committee and a general meeting on his case, appeal to a court of law for redress, he shall be expelled this Society, and forfeit all interest he has in the Society's funds."

In the address of this Society there is the following passage:—

"It is now about twenty-two years since the formation of the Society, and during that period, by the united action of its members, it has been able to control circumstances to our advantage by shortening the hours of labour (whatever necessity may still exist for a further diminution) and raising our wages to something coming nearer an adequacy for our just requirements. . . . As you are aware, there are two classes in society, the one class labour and produce as well as consume; the other consume only. The latter class, what do they lack, or what have they not? The former class, at all events the great majority of the working classes, what have they, we may say, for their incessant toil? Why that which may feed the machine to keep him in working trim; but certainly neither the means nor the opportunity for that recreation and intellectual improvement which is requisite for the proper action of the body and mind. Labour should have its rights and enjoy them as well as capital."

The preface to the rules of the Casters and Stonemen of Glasgow's Society is to the same effect.

In the same tone the Society of Plumbers of Liverpool addresses its members, as follows. "The utility of societies established for purposes similar to the present is now generally acknowledged, not only for the benefits secured to their members, but also for their good effect in keeping up a remunerative rate of wages; for a slight reflection on the matter cannot fail to enable them to perceive, that but for the efforts made by these bodies, the attempts made to reduce wages and increase the hours of labour would not have been so successfully met and resisted as they have been during the last few years.

"The laws respecting strikes—happily so much less called for of

late—are stated as explicitly as the nature of the case will admit. The good sense of the members will, no doubt, lead to great caution on this point, in order to effect an amicable arrangement of any dispute or contemplated innovation, instead of rashly having recourse to extreme measures, alike subversive of the interests of the employer and the employed. At the same time, every legal and just endeavour should be made to maintain the present standard of wages, and to prove to the employer the injustice and injury to himself, his customers, and the operatives, arising from the overstocking the trade with apprentices in undue proportion to the number of hands employed."

The rules which follow are similar to many that have been described above. A majority of the Society must decide on a strike, but in every instance a deputation must previously be appointed to wait on the employer, to urge upon him a respectful but firm remonstrance against the act of innovation or encroachment complained of, and the secretary must be informed of the number of plumbers in the town, the number of plumbers unconnected, the number of members out of employment, the state of trade, and every other particular necessary for the consideration of the Society.

In the Potters of Glasgow's Society, the committee have not power to advise more than four members to leave their situations at once, Should the number of members involved in a dispute be more than four, a general meeting must decide as to the steps to be taken.

"We have no doubt that some employers will look upon this society with a suspicious eye, and think it is got up for no other purpose than to be in mere opposition to them and their interests; we have no such intention; we wish the interests of the employer and employed to be mutually and equally protected."

"Any member losing his employment through intemperance, neglect, or insolence to his employer, shall forfeit all claim to aliment for the space of six weeks."—*Cloth Lappers of Glasgow.*

"As man alone, in a servile state, is a being weak, helpless, and defenceless, it was found necessary for those who had one common interest at stake, to unite together for support and defence; as twenty men would be better able to preserve their persons and properties from rapacity, injustice, and oppression. . . . The laws of God and of justice declare, that 'the labourer is worthy of his hire,' and loudly demand that he should secure a fair and equitable remuneration for his labour. To obtain this, a counter society was the poor man's only hope, not only that he might thereby obtain his right, but also that he might raise a barrier against further oppression—an invulnerable bulwark erected on justice, cemented by unanimity, firmness, and brotherly love."—*Coopers of Glasgow.*

The Journeymen Bakers of Glasgow express themselves to much the same effect; amongst their rules are the following:—

That no member engage upon any other terms than a cash wage, nor for a longer period than one week, and that he receive the full amount of his wage at the end of the week, also a week's warning be

given and taken by both parties, and that he receive payment of all fast days in lieu of Sabbath-day sponging.

Any member working on a fast day to receive one day's pay over and above his regular wages.

That no member work longer than twelve hours per day, meal hours included; but if members show to the committee that arrangements are in actual operation for additional accommodation, over hours will be granted in the afternoon.

That no member work beside a non-member.

The Joiners of Glasgow address their members as follows.

"In the present state of the law, no legislative enactment being in existence by virtue of which the conflicting claims of capital and labour may be equally adjusted, it becomes the duty of working men to have recourse to all constitutional means to remedy this evil in the state of society, and to supply this deficiency in the law, by the adoption of the means best calculated to promote their interests or defend those interests when assailed. . . . Unity of interests and aim bespeaks unity of action. The social salvation of the working classes must be wrought out by their own exertions, through the instrumentality of persevering, faithful union," and so on. The rules call for no special notice.

The Ovenmen, Kilnmen, and Saggar Makers of Burslem state in the preamble to their rules as follows:—"The degradation and ruin to which our trade is more especially exposed than any other branch in the potting department, and the nefarious actions daily practised upon us by tyrannical manufacturers, ambitious bailiffs, and unthinking, unprincipled, and knavish undertakers of work, are the consequent and main reasons of us uniting in one combined body, and to prevent the recurrence and increase of the evils we are now contending with, and to obtain and maintain a reasonable remuneration for our labour, to resist and restrain tyrannical power, emanating from where it may; and to afford mutual protection to each and every member that is oppressed, and to promote each other's good in every possible and laudable way, are the objects of our Society."

The rules which follow are of an ordinary character, and do not call for any notice, with this exception: "That every member shall honestly serve his employer according to his agreement; but if the master break his agreement, then such breach of conduct shall be referred to the council committee, whose decision shall be final."

Among the rules of the Flat Pressers' Society we find as follows.

"That the Executive Committee shall study the most favourable opportunities that occur, and use every means within its power to regulate the number of apprentices in proportion to the journeymen, namely, not more than one apprentice to three journeymen.

"That the Executive Committee shall as much as possible equalize the price of labour; it shall as much as possible avoid all strikes, and never sanction one, however strongly recommended, until every other means have been tried; and then if it appears that justice to the trade demands one, it shall receive at least the sanction of the majority of

the lodges before it can be considered as final ; it shall then be in the power of the committee, if necessary, to lay one extra levy for that purpose.

"That in all cases of dispute between employers and members of this Society taken to the County Court, each member undertakes to pay into the Society, in case the trial is decided in his favour, all monies advanced either by the Society or their attorney on his account ; but if through ignorance, misunderstanding, misrepresentation, or any unforeseen circumstances the trial be lost, such person or persons acting as aforesaid agree to pay one-half of the loss, and the Society the other."

The Hollowware Pressers have adopted rules to same effect.

The Operative Slaters' Trade Protecting Society of Glasgow purports to have been instituted the 2nd of September, 1852.

In the preamble to its rules the following passages may deserve quotation :—

"We should not, however, circumscribe the time, the energies, and the means of trades' unions to the mere maintaining or advancing the wages of labour ; but that as fellow labourers with, and powerful auxiliaries to, the various philanthropic movements in our behalf, they may powerfully aid in the social regeneration of the children of toil.

"The hourly exposure to accidental death and maimed bodies, which is a natural consequence of our occupation, if rewarded on the principles of equity and justice (as acknowledged and acted upon in all fire and life insurance transactions, that the greater hazard should bear the higher premium), would undoubtedly place us amongst the best paid class of operatives in the kingdom.

"The annually recurring periods of protracted stagnation, caused by the almost entire cessation of demand for our labour in the winter season, is also a disadvantage peculiarly severe; . . . yet . . . our remuneration has ever been allowed by all disinterested minds to be most inadequate, and no surprise need be felt that the usual fruits have followed—ignorance and misery, intemperance and crime.

"As this numerous train of social evils may be traced for the most part to our own neglect and disunion, we must find within ourselves the remedy ; and by means of permanent organization, self-culture, and self-reliance, attempt to stem the farther progress of our social degradation, and then to rise in the scale of moral, social, and domestic well-being."

The objects of the Society are defined to be, "to procure an equitable remuneration for our labour, and to aid in vindicating the rights of labour generally, by all moral and legal means."

Amongst the rules we may remark the allowance of "a liberal deduction on both entry money and levies, according to age and infirmities," to "slaters above fifty years of age;" the formation of a "registration book" for apprentices, in which "the men in the squad" are to see that every lad working, has his name enrolled, the ratio of apprentices to journeymen being fixed as one to four ; the regulations as to tramps and their cards. "No warnings" are "either

to be asked or given, nor task work executed, nor engagements entered into under employers," by any member of the Society. Any reduction of wages, "or other glaring encroachment," is to be reported the same day by the aggrieved parties to an officer of the Society, who is to convene the committee. A fine of 1*s.* is inflicted on any member "working on Saturday afternoons," but is not to apply to men working in the country. "The object of this rule is to prevent men from working on Saturday afternoons unnecessarily, the masters having consented to pay double time in case of necessity." No labourer is "to work at any description of work which ought to be done by a slater."

The Society is connected with district societies, and sends a delegate to the Glasgow "Council of United Trades." To the rules is annexed a member's pass book, giving in five separate columns the "date," "cash received in writing," "cash received in figures," "fines and arrears," and "secretary's initials."

The objects of the Liverpool Painters' Society are stated to be, "to promote the interests of its members in procuring employment, to protect them in the due exercise of their rights and privileges as workmen, to mediate when necessary between the employer and his men for the furtherance of their common interests; and generally to promote the welfare and stability of the trade in accordance with the statute 5 Geo. IV. c 95, intituled, An Act to Repeal the Laws relative to the Combination of Workmen;" among the rules to be noticed are as follows —

"That where practicable, no member shall be allowed to work in shops where more than one apprentice is employed for every six men.

"That no member shall work for any employer under the stipulated rate of wages agreed upon for the time being by the members in general meeting assembled.

"That no member shall work on Sunday or Christmas Day unless he receive double pay for the same, and no member to work more than two hours per quarter overtime.

"That any member going to work in the country, where he cannot get home to his family on Saturday night, be allowed sixpence per day country money, independent of lodging money; and any member going to work on board of any ship lying in the river must either be provided with his victuals or receive one shilling per day extra wages in place of the same.

"Operatives not members going to work in a shop in connexion with this Society shall be requested to join the Society within five days of their entrance; on their refusal to do so, notice shall be given to the committee, who shall then take such steps as they deem necessary."

The Tailors' Institute of Liverpool states, "that the trade has been reduced to its present deplorable state by the gradual introduction of what has been fitly called the 'Sweating System.' This condition demands the serious attention of every member of the trade and of the public. The Society is established as a means of guarding

against and removing these abuses, by bringing the power of public opinion to bear upon them as the most effectual check to these evils, and as a means of improving the social, moral, and intellectual condition of its members, by providing a library, reading-room, &c. It will likewise be the means of creating a reciprocity of feeling and interests between the employer and the employed, by constituting it a free labour market; it will also advocate the being employed in wholesome and healthy work-shops belonging to the employer. By the adoption of these and other sanitary measures, and by obtaining employment for our unemployed, we hope to make the Institute the means of elevating our trade from the degraded position it at present

In the revised rules of the "Miners' Association of the Adwalton and Drighlington District" (June, 1860), the rule that the Association will not support or defend any of its members who shall violate the laws of the land, "unless he can give undeniable satisfaction to the district board of directors that he is not in the wrong according to the rules and regulations of this Association,"—and the rule that "no miner or byeworkman," who are not joined to the Association "shall be allowed to work in any of the collieries which may from time to time be joined to this Association," are entirely struck out; and the rule that no colliery or lodge is to be allowed to strike or cease work on any account, except by order of the district board of directors, is exchanged for the more practical one, "that should any colliery or lodge strike or cease work without the consent of the district meeting, they shall receive no pay from the funds of this Association during the strike."

fortnight; over twelve and under twenty, once a month; over twenty miles every three months.

"All piecework is strictly prohibited, and all lathing to be done by plasterers; any lathing done by others that are not plasterers shall not be covered by members of this Society."

The three Societies next hereinafter noticed, all spring from the West Yorkshire colliery strike of 1858-9, which in the first place developed a "Miners' Association for the West Yorkshire District" (March, 1858), then a "Miners' Association of the United Kingdom" (November 9, 1858), both of which have however now disappeared.

The rules of the "United Trades' Association of Miners, Salt Makers, and Boatmen of Lancashire and Cheshire," passed June 6, 1859, must be read as if the word "boatmen" were omitted, this class of its members having receded. The object of the Association "is to secure the greatest amount of social happiness possible for those in connexion with it, by mutually combining to secure the rights of labour,

to equalize the hours, and to perform it according to rule or system, and to see that it be justly remunerated." The rules contemplate an "agitation fund," and the insertion of "articles in the public papers bearing on the interests of this Association." The "labour protection fund" is for the relief of "all persons who may be discharged through taking an active part in the question of labour and wages." No "pit, or part of a pit, or colliery, or district, or other trade connected with this Association" is to be entitled to the aid of the general board unless, on the arising of a dispute between employers and employed, the general financial secretary is made acquainted with the particulars, who then summons, if necessary, six "of the most experienced workmen to form a committee, viz. two from the pit or bank where the dispute arises, one from the salt makers [one from the boatmen], and the rest from the miners; in all cases the secretary to attend." The decision of this committee is to be "legal and acted upon." The Association "will not support or defend any member who shall in any way violate the laws of his country, and by so doing lose his employment."

The "Miners' Association of the Adwalton and Drighlington District" has for its object to raise a fund "to insure a sum of money to be paid to the members who may be duly authorized by the district board of directors to strike or cease work to obtain any just and reasonable advance of wages for the labour of the members, and to such as may be thrown out of employment or victimized for taking an active part, or in any way promoting the welfare of this Association, and to prevent all other encroachments upon the rights of the members." The district board of directors has "power to authorise any number of members to strike or cease work for any of the objects named," to "equalize and diminish the labours of the members," to "send a deputation to the conference of any trades' union or elsewhere when deemed advisable." In authorizing a strike, they are "at the same time" to "lay an additional levy" on all the members, "to such an amount as will pay one-fourth of the expenses of the strike for the first three months, and half of the expenses for the second three months, and so on afterwards." No colliery or lodge is to "be allowed to strike or cease work, except to prevent a reduction of wages, until the same shall have been joined to this Association for at least three months." If any colliery persists in not complying with the resolutions of the district meeting after written warning from the district secretary, "they shall be dealt with as the district board of directors think proper." The Association "will not support or defend any of its members who shall violate the laws of his country, unless he can give undeniable satisfaction to the district board of directors that he is not in the wrong according to the rules and regulations of this Association." No colliery or lodge is to "be allowed to strike or cease work on any account except by order of the district board of directors." "No miner or bywork man who is not joined to this Association shall be allowed to work in any of the collieries which may from time to time be joined to this Associa-

tion." Men wishing to remove from one colliery to another are required to have clearances.

In plainly and openly setting up its own regulations above the law of the land, this body goes greater lengths than any whose rules have come before us.

The "General Laws for the Government of the Miners' Association, Barnsley District," were revised February 13th, 1860; the preface, borrowed from that of the rules of the projected "Miners' Association of the United Kingdom" before mentioned, declares it "absolutely necessary that a firm compact of interests should exist between the whole of the miners of the United Kingdom." The objects of the Society are, "the receiving a proper remuneration for labour, and providing an allowance on the death of its members." The members are divided into two classes, "9*d.* per fortnight of the first class, 4½*d.* of the second class, together with the whole of the levies, and three-fourths of the entrance fees," form a "labour-defence and funeral fund," which is applied "to liquidate all expenses resulting from lock-outs and strikes, to the support of victims, paying delegates' wages, and all other general and local necessary expenses that may be sanctioned and approved of by the delegate meeting." The remaining one-fourth of the entrance fees, with "3*d.* per fortnight per full member," and "1½*d.* per fortnight per half member"—it is supposed, the same as members of the first and second class respectively—form an "accident fund, for the relief of members incapacitated from following their employment by accident while at work in or about any colliery or iron-stone mine; but no member is allowed to contribute to the latter fund alone; "grievances," and "the names of all persons victimized" are to be immediately reported by the "local secretaries of lodges" to the district secretary,—no member being "eligible to receive relief as a victim" till returned as such by his own lodge, and till approval of the return by the delegates. In the event of any dispute with an employer, the lodge is to meet to devise means for a settlement; but "no document or other agreement in writing" is to be presented to employers or their agents till examined by the district secretary or other persons duly appointed, with certain provisions for its revision. No lodge is to strike or leave employment without the sanction of the delegate meeting, which fixes the allowance to lock-outs or members on strike, but will not give "relief or redress" to any lodge except upon having before it a correct list of the members of such lodge, distinguishing the "financial" and "unfinancial members," and the amount of arrears due by each.

"Special rules, adapted to the peculiar circumstances of each colliery, must be drawn up by every lodge; such special rules to be in strict conformity with the general rules."

The number of members in the Barnsley District, according to the fortnightly balance-sheet for June 18, 1860, was 4,094; the total income for the fortnight £238 17*s.* 10½*d.*; the total expenditure £217 17*s.* 4*d.*; the balance in hand £78 14*s.* 1*d.*

(I.) SOCIETIES AND UNIONS MAINLY FOR TRADE PURPOSES.

TRADE.	Date of Institution	Sphere of Action.	Contributions.		Allowances.			REMARKS.
			Entrance.	Weekly.	On Strike per week	Funeral.	Other.	
1. Power-loom Weavers....	..	Lancashire..	..	1*d.*	..	£3		
2. Carvers and Gilders	1857	Edinburgh..	6*d.*	1*d.*				
3. Carpenters & Joiners	..	Manchester .	2*s.* 6*d.*	3*d.*				
4. Chain&Trace Makers....	1844	Cradley, head-quarters	..	6*d.*; 3*d.* women & chln.	10*s.* p.w. 6*d.* each child.			
5. Coopers.....	..	U. K.....	..	1*d.*	10*s.*	..	..	Committee to have power to raise the weekly contribution to 6*d.* if a struggle continues.
6. Carters and Storemen ..	1857	Glasgow ..	2*s.* 6*d.*	2*d.*	10*s.*	£5	..	Should the funds be reduced below £350, committee empowered to assess the members.
7. Lithographers	..	Liverpool ..	5*s.*	6*d.*	14*s.* for 4 weeks, 10*s.* for 4 weeks longer, 5*s.* after that.	£4	£1 for tramps; 10*s.* p.w. for 4wks. whenout of employ, 7*s.* 6*d.* for next 4 weeks.	
8. Painters	..	Liverpool ..	2*s.* 6*d.*	2*d.*	..	£5	..	Committee to recommend additional contributions to general meeting.
9. Potters.....	1857	Glasgow ..	1*s.*	3*d.*	7*s.*, 2*s.* for wife, 1*s.* each child.	..	3 weeks' aliment in advance for those who are well who will search for employ.	
10. ShippingTrades	1854	Liverpool ..	..	..	..	..	..	To meet the necessary expenses a levy shall occasionally be made on each Society, and no further call be made till that levy be exhausted.
11. Tailors	1850	Liverpool ..	6*d.*	1*d.*				
12. Typographers.	..	England	1*s.* to 2*s.* 6*d.*, as funds are less or greater.	2*d.*	as below (13)			

TRADE.	Date of Institution	Sphere of Action.	CONTRIBUTIONS.		ALLOWANCES.			REMARKS.
			Entrance.	Weekly.	On Strike per week	Funeral.	Other.	
13. Typographers.	1821	Liverpool ..	5s. to 10s. or such sum as committee determines	2d. to 6d. according to wages, from 10s. to 30s.	For 9 wks ⅘ths of wages, for next 9 ⅗, after 3rd.	£8 to £10	Allowances to trav'lers & tramps from 6s. to 40s.	
14. Tailors	1849	Glasgow ..	2s. 6d.	1d.	12s.	..	Travel-money to those on strike in search of employ.	
15. Bakers	..	Scotland..	2s. 6d. to 10s.	2d.	..	£5		
16. Coopers	1851	Glasgow....	1s. 8d.	2½d.	10s.	£3, & £2 for wife.		
17. Ship-joiners..	1853	Liverpool ..	£4	1d.	36s.	..	..	General meetings to levy rates.
18. House Carpenters & Joiners	1827	U. K.	Optional each	with lodge.	..	..	..	The society is an Association of Lodges with their separate Rules.
19. Cloth-lappers.	..	Glasgow ..	5s.	3d.	2-thirds of wages for 12 weeks.	£5	Out of work 7s. p. w. for 8 weeks, 5s. for next 8, 3s. for next 8.	
20. Bricklayers..	..	E. and W...	10s. 6d.	1½d.	12s.	..	Current rate of wages to those dischd. on accnt. of their connection with Union.	Committee of management to have a fund of £250, which is to be renewed by weekly subscriptions.
21. Typographers.	..	New Orleans	3 dollars	12½ cents	8 dols. if married, 5 dols. if single.	60 dols.		
22. Machine Workers....	1844	E.	5s.	4d.	7s. for 6 weeks in every three months.			
23. Joiners	..	Glasgow & W. of Scotland	Members from time to determine		Full amount of wages			
24. Factory operatives	1850	Coventry ..	..	1d.	..	..	..	Special levies for strikes.
25. Seamen's Protection Society	1851	U. K.	10s.					
26. Seamen	..	Sunderland .	15s.	..	10s.	£2	..	£1 in case of shipwreck; 1s. per annum from each member to establish a life-boat.
27. Slaters	1852	Glasgow	£2	3d. from 1st Mrch to 30th Nov.; 2d from 30 Nov. to March 1	1s. 8d. per day.	£5; £3 for member's wife.	Accidnt, 6s. per week for 1 year.	Connected with District Societies.
			Reducible in certain cases.					

TRADE.	Date of Institution	Sphere of Action.	CONTRIBUTIONS.		ALLOWANCES.			REMARKS.
			Entrance.	Weekly.	On Strike per week.	Funeral.	Other.	
28. Miners	1859	Adwalton and Drighlington (Yorksh.)	10*s.*; boys, 6*d.*	6*d.*; 2*d.* to 1*d.*	7*s.*; 3*s* 6*d* to 1*s*	..	..	Additional levies for strikes; an association of collieries or lodges.
29. Miners, Saltmakers [and Boatmen]..	1859	Lancash. and Cheshire	6*d.*	1*d.* fortnightly.	7*s.*	..	..	A "County or Agitation Fund," 2 "Counties" divided into "Districts" Special levies for strikes.
30. Miners	1860	Barnsley ..	10*s.* 1st class, 5*s.* 2nd do.	6*d.* 1st class, 3*d.* 2nd do.	Fixed by delegate meeting.	£8 1st class, £4 second.	Accidnt, fixed by each colliery.	2 Funds: "Labour-defence and Funeral", and "Accident," an Association of Collieries & Lodges. Special levies if required.
31. Watchmakers	..	Coventry ..	..	1*d.*				
32. Railway Spring Makers	..	U. K.	£1	..	8*s.*, 2*s.* for wife, 1*s.* for each child.	..	..	Contributions fixed from time to time by Society.
33. Ownmen and Kilnmen ..	..	Burslem ..	..	3*d.*	ditto.	..	..	Contributions fixed by Council from time to time.
34. Spring Makers	..	Sheffield ..	£1	Com. to decide.	ditto.			
35. Watchmakers.	..	Coventry ..	..	1*d.*	Com. to decide.			
36. Brass Founders	..	Edinburgh..	5*s.*	3*d.*	£2 8*s.* once in 6 months.			
37. Flat Pressers.	..	Hanley	Contributions to be fixed by branch societies		10*s.*; wife 2*s.*, children 1*s.* each.			
38. Hollowware-pressers	..	.. ..	the same.					
39. Lacemakers ..	..	Nottingham.	1*s.*	3*d.*				

(II.) SOCIETIES FOR TRADE AND BENEFIT PURPOSES.

Trade.	Date of Institution.	Sphere of Action.	Number of Branches.	Number of Members.	Limits of Age of Admission.	Contributions.					Special Levies.	Allowances.						
						Entrance.	Per Week.					Sickness.	Accident.	Funeral.	Tramp.	Want of Work.	Superannuation.	On Strike.
							To Benefit Fund.	To Fund for Trade purposes.	To &c.	Total.								
1. Coachmakers	1834	U. K.	120	3,652	23-50	5s. 3d.	..	..	½d. to Funeral Fund.	6½d.	.. ..	Per Week.	£50	£12 and £12	1s. 6d. and bed.	Per Wk. ..	P. W. 12s., 10s., & 5s.	Per Week. 10s. to man, 3s. to wife, 1s. for each child under 12.
2. Bookbinders.	1850	London	..	613	..	£1 1s.	..	..	..	6d.	.. ..	Right to a petition.	..	..	7s.	35s. to 21s. down.	2s. 6d.	
3. Upholsterers	1844	Liverpool ..	..	..	..	5s.	..	..	..	3½d.	When funds reduced to £20 a levy of 2d., and when under £10 a levy of 6d.	5s. for three months.	..	..	..	8s., 2s. to wife for 4 weeks.	..	10s., 2s. to wife, 1s. for each child under 12.
4. Tin-plate Workers..	1833	Glasgow....	..	..	20-50	4s. to 15s.	..	..	..	3d.	6d. levied for funerals, 6d. a month for Emigration Fund.	8s. for six weeks once in six months.	..	£4 and £3	..	7s. for 4 weeks once in 6 weeks.	..	14s., 2s. to wife.
5. Plumbers ..	..	Liverpool ..	..	..	..	2s. 6d.	..	..	..	1½d., not less than 2½d. to reserved fund.	2d. towards each funeral; special levies to be laid to supply deficiencies.	.. ..	..	£3	..	..	3s. 6d.	12s.
6. Smiths	1822	England	..	..	20-50	6s. to 10s.	3d.	6d.	..	9d.	.. ..	10s. for 12 weeks, 6s. for 12 weeks, & 4s. after.	£28	£10 and £10	1d. per mile.	10s.	2s. to 3s.	
7. Tailors.....	..	Glasgow ..	..	..	50	2s. 6d.	2d.	1s.	..	3d.	.. ..	8s. for 13 wks. 6s. for next 13, 4s. after.	..	£3 and £3; £1 for child.				
8. Flint Glass Makers ..	..	U. K.	..	..	..	7s. 6d. to 40s.	..	..	..	8d. to 1s.	.. ..	.. ..	..	£5 and £3.	Traveling expenses £8 10s. for emigration.	10s. for 4 months, 8s. for 4, 6s. for 8, 5s. for 14, 4s. for 12.	..	15s. for 6 months, 10s. for next 6 months.

9. Compositors.	..	London	..	..	..	5s.	2d.	2d. to 4d.	..	4d. to 6d.	.. ..	.. ..	..	..	5s.	4s. to 30s. during each ½-year.		
10. Cotton Spinners	..	Preston	..	..	..	..	Com. to decide	1d.	..	..	.. ..	.. ..	..	..	..	4s. per week for 13 weeks	..	10s. for 13 weeks, 1s. for each child, 5s. for next 13 weeks.
11. Steam Engine Makers ..	1824	England	..	..	22 to 45	10s. to £5	..	..	..	8d.	.. ..	12s. for 26 weeks.	£100	£5	1s. 6d. per day.	12s.	5s.	
12. Stone Masons	..	E. and W. ..	213	..	21-40	10s. to £2	3½d.	4d.	..	7½d.	.. ..	10s. for 24 weeks.	£100	..	6d. per day and bed.	..	..	10s.
13. Machine Printers ..	..	England	..	..	45	£3 to £5 10s.	..	..	..	7½d.	.. ..	.. ..	10s. per wk for 6 mnths 5s. for 6 ditto	..	10s. for 6 months, 5s. for 6 ditto.	..	..	25s. for 3 months, 10s. 3 ditto, 6s. 3 ditto, 3s. after.
14. Morocco Leather Finishers	..	London	..	..	..	7s. 6d.	..	..	..	1s.	1s. from each member for any one wishing to emigrate, not exceeding 4 in one year.	7s. 6d. for 13 weeks.	..	..	£1	7s. 6d. for 13 weeks.		
15. Engineers ..	1851	U. K.	..	..	20-40	15s. to £3 10s.	..	..	..	1s.	.. ..	10s. for 26 weeks, 5s. after.	£100	£12	..	10s. for 14 wks., 7s. for 30, 6s. after.	7s. per week.	
16. Plasterers ..	..	U. K.	..	..	21-	1s.	2d.	2d.	..	..	.. ..	.. ..	10s. for 3 mnths 5s. aft.	£8	..	..	..	15s.
17. Coachmakers	..	Manchester .	..	..	..	6s.	..	..	..	6d.	2d. to every funeral.	8s. 8d. for 3 months, 4s. 8d. after.	..	£5 and £5	1s. 6d. per day.	8s. 8d.		
18. Shipwrights.	1846	Sunderland .	6	..	..	£4	..	..	3d.	..	.. ..	.. ..	Levy of 6d.	£10	..	..	..	One-half of current wages for 2 months, and afterwards, 1 quarter.
19. Saw Makers	..	Sheffield ..	..	..	..	£1 6s.	..	..	..	1s.; 6d. if in country.	6d. for funeral.	5s. for 12 weeks, 2s. 6d. after.	..	£5 and £5	..	..	..	8s., 1s. for wife, 1s. for each child.

ACCOUNT

OF THE

CHAIN MAKERS' STRIKE,

IN 1859-60.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By GODFREY LUSHINGTON,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

[The materials for this account have been derived mainly from the Operative Chain Makers' Journal, and from letters of both masters and men extracted from the newspapers. At the end is printed at full length the answers by a master to the questions submitted to him.]

The United Kingdom with its vast mercantile marine necessarily supports a large number of chain makers. There are considerable factories of chain both in Wales and Scotland (in Glasgow); but the two principal seats of manufacture are in the Midland Counties and in Northumberland. In the Midland Counties there are factories at Chester, Cradley, Walsall, Dudley, Wolverhampton, and other places, and the operatives number nearly 3000, but they are not a thriving community: they work at lower wages and produce an inferior kind of chain as compared with the operatives in the North; also (whether or not this is the cause of their lower position) for some years, previous to last year, they have not been combined, except in local clubs. The Newcastle chain makers on the other hand are more flourishing; they make the best chains, and receive the best wages; and they have a strong and highly organized Union. Of this organization, however, no particulars have been furnished us beyond the fact that the subscriptions of members are 3*d.* per head weekly, that the monthly income and expenditure amount usually to about £30, and that each of the local secretaries receives 2*s.* per man per quarter, paid out of the subscriptions of his own locality; thus the remuneration of each varies in proportion to the duties he has to discharge. This Union has established a monthly periodical, called *The Chain Makers' Journal and Trades' Circular*, of which 500 to 1,100 copies are printed. It has been thought advisable to append to this Report an abstract of a single number as a specimen. Some remarks, however, upon this organ of the operatives may here not be out of place. The one bad feature in it is, that it contains a list of the non-union men in the trade, preceded by the following observations:

"The great regard these men have for their own interests, and those of their families, prevents their paying 3*d.* per week for the purpose of improving the position of the trade. They cannot see any benefit derived from union. In this free land, we are proud that every man can do as he likes, so long as he does not injure his neighbour, but their conduct will be long remembered."

The publication of this list must be regarded as a blot upon the Journal. It is true it does not advocate violence; but it can serve no practical purpose but a bad one; it is a social proscription or excommunication list; and as such, especially as it is addressed to an uneducated class of men, must have indirectly encouraged that feeling which broke out into the criminal and malicious outrages that disgraced the strike of the chain makers. It is also injurious to the cause it is meant to serve; for it is an impediment to the recognition of the principle of trades' unions, which have to overcome the impression, more or less unjustly prevailing amongst masters and the public at large, that men join them chiefly under coercion.

In all other respects the Journal seems just what it ought to be. The contents are generally as follows: a leading article relative to the chain trade, either upon some standing characteristic of it, or upon any late occurrence of importance, especially anything in the nature of a strike; an account of the regular council meetings or of any general meeting of the Union in the North; the accounts of the Society, showing the monthly income and expenditure; the statistics of the labour in the chain trade of the North (supplied by the operatives themselves, but which the Journal invites the masters to correct), specifying the number of days of employment actually had by the various classes of chain makers at the various factories during the past month; the monthly export of anchors and chains from Newcastle-upon-Tyne averaging over 100 tons; news of the chain trade in the South; announcement of all strikes in distant parts, operating as a warning to unionists to take no engagement there until the strike is over; the prices of the iron market; winding up with a general article exhibiting the state of industry and commerce throughout the United Kingdom.

Such a Journal, it is clear, must be of great service, not only to the operatives, to whom especially it is dedicated, but indirectly to the whole community. It supplies to the workman the statistics of his trade. It is the ignorance of these that causes him either to demand or to submit to unjust terms at the hands of his employer; it is the knowledge of these that directs him where to go in search of employment, and, more than anything else, helps to expedite the proper operation of the law of political economy, which would make the wages for the same work everywhere equal. The social importance of the Journal consists in this, that it binds together into one community operatives who before stood isolated in local sections, or as mere individuals, and that it opens and circulates amongst them broad and intelligent views of their position, their relation to each other, to their masters, and to other trades.

As one proof of this, it might be pointed out that whilst the Jour-

nal avowedly adopts the cause of the operatives against the masters, it did not hesitate to condemn as foolish the strike of the shoemakers in the Midland Counties against the introduction of machinery. But the strongest proof is, that the Newcastle chain makers, whilst flourishing themselves, on hearing that their brother chain makers in the Midland Counties, with whom they were not connected otherwise than as working the same trade, were depressed in circumstances, voluntarily resolved to send a mission to inquire and report, with a view to ascertain whether any steps could be taken for their assistance. Accordingly, on the 10th of April, 1859, the deputation left Newcastle, visited and held meetings at Cradley Heath, the Lye, the Lye Waste, Dudley, Stourbridge; thence went on to Newbridge, in Wales; returning northwards, stopped at Liverpool, thence proceeded to Glasgow, and finally returned to Newcastle, after an absence of nearly three weeks. The deputies had their expenses paid by the Newcastle Union, and refused remuneration from those whom they visited. The report which they brought home specified four evils as requiring immediate remedy. These were :—

1. Employment of women in chain making.
2. Long day's work.
3. Manufacture of inferior chain.
4. Want of a general union amongst chain makers.

The first of these evils it does not appear that any step was taken to remedy beyond the protest in the report itself. The second was made the subject of a leading article in the Journal for August, which contained the scale of day's work [inserted in Appendix I.] that had been acted upon by the men of one factory at Gateshead (Messrs. Abbot and Co.) for many years, accompanied by an earnest request that the same should be adopted in all the factories in the north of England absolutely, and in the south with as little modification as might be necessary. It is to be regretted that this scale does not exhibit, except to those conversant with the trade, the number of hours' work in the day. The third evil mentioned in the report was the manufacture of inferior chain. This also was made the subject of a leading article in a subsequent number of the Journal, and also led to the circulation of the following address.

"*To the Directors of Marine Assurance Associations, Merchants, Shipowners, Captains, &c.*

"GENTLEMEN,—Everything relating to the safety of shipping must be deeply interesting to you, in consequence of your capital being invested in the trade. We therefore submit the following to your consideration, being persuaded that your profits are materially diminished by the losses of ships at sea, which often occur from the want of due attention to the quality of the cables and other chains that are used.

"As practical workmen daily occupied in the manufacture of chains, we have been made painfully aware, during the past few years, of the great increase in the manufacture of inferior cables and topsail sheet chains, in many parts of the kingdom; thus proving that their use is not alone confined to the fitting out of vessels in England, but that large quantities are also exported to all the principal shipping harbours of the world. The consequence is, that ships constructed with all the improvements that mechanical science can devise, and laden with valuable

cargoes, are often totally lost from the insufficiency and inferiority of their cables and other chains. Men's lives are sacrificed, merchants sustain severe losses, marine insurance societies have their profits diminished, and a portion of the wealth of the nation is annually destroyed by the continued use of bad chains.

"This evil has of late so much increased, that it is gradually becoming more difficult for the honest manufacturer, who employs firstrate workmen, and uses a good quality of iron in the manufacture of his chains, to bear up against the unprincipled trader, who supplies a valueless article at cheaper rates and upon false representations. It is not at all an uncommon practice for dealers in chain to give certificates to the buyer to the effect, that the article supplied has been properly proved, when in reality, although it has gone through the machine, yet the proper weight has not been put upon it. In many chain works, when the buyer is determined that the chain purchased shall bear the Admiralty weight, an additional sum beyond the regular price is paid to the workman; thus proving that it is an uncommon practice for them to prove their chain according to Admiralty weight.

"From inquiries recently made at the Liverpool public test, it was ascertained that, a short time ago, some captains (who during their voyages had lost their anchors), with a view to know whether their cables were reliable or not, brought them to the machine, when they broke to pieces with several tons less weight than they ought to have borne. In some chain works, a certain description, named by the workmen 'boiler chain,' is made in large quantities, the agreement between the employer and the workmen being, that it is neither to be examined nor proved, but taken from the 'block' of the workmen to the 'boiler,' where it is coated with tar, and sent into the market utterly valueless for any purpose for which chain ought to be used.

"Instead of receiving assurance upon trust, merchants should be thoroughly satisfied that the chains which they purchase are proved in a proper manner, as not one-half of those represented to be so, really are; and marine insurance societies should decidedly refuse to insure either ships or cargoes without the owner of the vessel can produce a proper certificate that his chains have been properly proved.

"For the greater security of shipping property, it has become an absolute necessity that, in all large ports, a public test should be erected, and a duly qualified inspector appointed to take charge of the machine.

"We have been emboldened to send these circulars to those interested in the matter in every large shipping port in the kingdom, and also to the principal harbours abroad, because we are firmly convinced, from our practical knowledge, that if such steps as we have suggested be acted upon, they would be found very materially to diminish casualties at sea.

"Signed on behalf of the Operative Chain Makers of England, Scotland, and Wales.

"CHARLES BLAKE.

"105, Iley Gate, Gateshead, Newcastle-upon-Tyne,
"*June 3rd*, 1859."

This address is only one more instance of the thousand ways in which the interests of the community are bound to the welfare of the operatives. The manufacture of inferior chain is ruinous to the shipowners who purchase it, but it also lowers the wages and injures the moral character of the operatives who make it, for the workman should have respect for his work. The employer who deals most fairly towards his men will be the one most likely to deal fairly towards his customers. Again, this address shows how important is the testimony of the operative as to the quality of the work manufactured, because his testimony is independent. The operative has no private interest of his own to clash with that of the public; on the contrary, being paid by the amount and quality of the work done, he has

every reason to tell the truth; the masters, on the other hand, make their fortunes in bargains with particular customers, and, though many doubtless do not yield to this temptation, have an interest in puffing their own goods, and in depreciating those of their rivals.

The fourth evil mentioned in the report was the want of union amongst chain makers generally. This the Newcastle Union endeavoured to remedy, partly by exhortations in the Journal, partly by the despatch of missions, and above all by munificent subscriptions to the Staffordshire men during the strike which is about to be described.

The deputation to Staffordshire found the operatives generally depressed and dissatisfied, and the men of one factory at Lye actually out on a strike, which had then already lasted for eight weeks. The cause of this strike was as follows: About the middle of February the premises of three of the workmen of the factory were entered during the night, and their bellows, to the value of £25, destroyed. As two of these men had not paid up their levies to the trade union, and the third objected to his name being enrolled as a member, the proprietors were of opinion that these acts of malice prepense had been committed at the instigation of the Union. The manager of the Chain Makers' Union solemnly denied that they had been done at the instigation either of himself or, so far as he knew, of any member of the Union. Nevertheless, the proprietors required the damage to be made good by those of their workmen who belonged to the Union, and also proposed to form a guarantee fund to renew the bellows of any non-unionist workman which might be destroyed, by levying a tax upon every bundle of iron served out to the unionist workmen. A strike was the consequence. The precise cause remains in uncertainty: the employers state that they would not have insisted upon the tax, but that their men, compelled by their union, refused to make good the actual damage done: the manager of the Union, on the other hand, declares that the men were quite ready to make indemnification for the past, but that the tax for the future was equally insisted upon, and to this the men would not submit. It also appears that the men of this factory were generally dissatisfied with their employers, on the alleged ground that deductions were improperly made from their wages in the shape of charges, fines, &c. However that may be, on the 21st of February, 1859, the men struck, in number from fifty to one hundred. Besides the support that they received from their own Union, the chain makers in the North, at a council meeting held at Newcastle on May 9th, resolved to contribute for them £5 per week so long as the strike should last, and at another meeting, held on May 28th, it was resolved that the £5 should be increased to £10. The strike continued till some time in the month of July, when the workmen it appears were taken back unconditionally.

This strike, however, was but in the nature of a private dispute, of which there were others in the district. Thus, at another factory men had been out on strike for four weeks in May and

June, on the ground that the proprietor of it had supplied the firm before mentioned with chain whilst their men were on strike. So, too, the tax for carriage of the iron imposed by the masters gave some discontent, and led to a resolution, passed at a general meeting held at Cradley on the 20th of June, that no master should be allowed to charge carriage for either iron or work, and that if any man allowed any master carriage, or in any other way submitted to a reduction, he should pay a fine of 10*s*. But the cause of the universal dissatisfaction throughout the Midland Counties was the low rate of wages; this led to the strike about to be narrated. But before entering upon the strike itself, it may be well by way of introduction to say a few words concerning the general character of the service of chain making, and the history for some years previous of the trade in the Midland Counties. Chain makers are hired on the condition that either party, master or man, if he wishes to determine the service, shall give a fortnight's notice. The master provides the man with material, iron; the man finds his own tools and firing, and sometimes has to pay a trifle for the carriage of the iron to and from the workshop. The system is one of piecework, the payment being so much per cwt. of chain manufactured; the master is bound to supply work if he has it, but not otherwise; the man to do the work supplied to him, but if unavoidably left idle by his master, he is not at liberty, or is not accustomed (for on this point there seems to be some conflict of opinion), to work for another master. Generally, it may be said that there are three kinds of chain made, viz., half-inch chain; chain smaller than half an inch, various kinds, called cowbands, traces, American swimmers, &c. which women and boys are able to manufacture; and chain larger than half an inch, which requires workmen of considerable strength.

The payment for the half-inch chain is the standard of the payment for other chains, which is in proportion to their size, higher or lower, being adjusted according to a regular scale. Thus, if the payment for the half-inch chain be for the time 4*s*. per. cwt., prices are said to be according to the 4*s*. list, if 5*s*. by the 5*s*. list, and so on.

With regard to the position of the chain makers in Staffordshire, the master states that "the smaller manufacturers have, since the breaking up of the Union, oppressed the men in their employ, and reduced the scale of wages to a very low figure. The men do not work in bodies, but have shops attached to their cottages, in which themselves and families work, and I do not think that *they* could protect themselves without combination; but men working in factories in large bodies can always secure a fair rate of wages without being society-men." But, on the other hand, the following account is given by Mr. Noah Forrest, a person connected with the operatives of the trade.

"In 1844 our average net wages were about 10*s*. per week for men, and for women and boys about half that sum. These wages were paid in cash at about half the warehouses in this locality, and the other half paid in goods charged at exorbitantly high prices; and the ready-money masters said they must reduce our wages, unless the trucksters were stopped paying in goods. The men

were not united, but were blaming, and in many places cursing each other for bringing the trade into such a miserable condition. This state of things had existed for a considerable length of time, and both masters and men seemed tired of it. A few of the more intelligent of the men met, and consulted together as to what course could be taken to improve the condition of the trade. It was agreed that a general meeting of the trade should be called, and that meeting agreed to attempt to put down truck. The course taken to effect this was to notice the principal truckster that in fourteen days from the date of the notice the men would cease to accept truck for their work. He would not at first consent to pay cash, and the men ceased to work for him till he expressed his intention to do so, which was at the end of the fifteenth week after the notice had been given, and the men were supported by a levy raised by the men at work. The next principal truckster was then noticed, and the men supported in the same way and with the same result, until all truck was abolished as far as chain makers were concerned, nor has the system been reimposed to this day. After this, an inquiry was instituted into the prices paid by the various firms. The firm that paid the lowest price was noticed as above stated, and the men supported as before, and so effectual was this course that within three years our wages were more than double what they had been before the men were united. The steady and industrious in the trade were comfortably off, and some families which were very favourably situated laid by money, &c., which has kept them above want in the less propitious times which have since intervened, whilst the spendthrifts of course acted as spendthrifts always do—the more they earned, the more they drank. Many in the trade seemed to forget what they had endured, and said there was no need of any money being paid, and they ceased to pay accordingly, which, as might be expected, caused others to cease. I had done a great part of the business of the Union for seven years, and warned them often as to what would overtake them, but they heeded not, and I left them, resolving never more to trouble myself with Union. But soon after 1854 the prices went down to as low a point as in 1844. The men made several attempts to get united, but soon failed. They invited me again and again to take the management, but I told them it would not suit me. The men became worse and worse off.

"'In 1858 we were so unhappy that in June an attempt was made to form a Union. I advised the men to get Mr. Homer to manage, and promised to assist them. We partially succeeded, but by the end of October in the same year lost what we had gained a few months before. In November a successful attempt to regain it was made, but even with that advance our net wages were not more than half what they had been in 1847.

"This being the case, and the men being generally united, it was determined to take the first favourable opportunity to get another advance. In 1858, an opinion that such an opportunity had then arrived became prevalent in our ranks, but Mr. Homer and myself (Mr. Forrest) thought there was not sufficient demand, and the men were prevailed on to wait a few weeks. In July, 1859, one of our principal employers told us that we ought to have the 5*s.* list, and that if we would make a general demand for it, he would give it to his men to begin with. The same gentleman had on a former occasion induced us to ask for an advance, which we obtained. The time of the year also was favourable; on the one hand, there was for the men reaping and other harvest work to be done; hop-picking season was approaching; on the other, the masters would receive shortly the usual autumnal orders from America, and might expect a better demand on the Continent in consequence of the recent peace. Thus any advance asked immediately would damage the masters much less than if it were asked when their hands might be full of orders taken at a less rate. The men therefore determined to make the attempt."

Accordingly, a general meeting was held at Dudley on July 18, 1859, at which were present deputies from factories at the Lye, Cradley, Cradley Heath, Netherton, Wolverhampton, Gould's Hill, and Tipton, and the practicability considered of enforcing a rise upon the 4*s.* list, under which men were then working. It was resolved

that "arrangements should be made as soon as possible to send in notices for an advance of wages," and a committee, consisting of men well acquainted with all sizes and sorts of work, were appointed to revise the *5s.* lists already in print, with a view to arrange on that basis a complete list of prices at so much per cwt., without any deduction for blast or iron cutting.

The result was the delivery of a written notice on July 23. On previous occasions there had been some difficulty about written general notices; either those men who signed first had been held to be the ringleaders, and had been supposed to have incurred the special displeasure of the masters, or else some had by inadvertence omitted to sign, and been prevented from taking advantage of the notice. This time, therefore, the manager of the Union sent in a written notice on behalf of all, to the following effect:—

"Cradley Heath, *July* 23, 1859.

"Gentlemen,—I beg respectfully to inform you that an advance of wages will be required by your factory men for all chain made by them after the 6th of August next. The list of prices will be forwarded in a few days.

"Yours respectfully,

"Thomas Homer.

"Messrs. A. and Co."

Shortly afterwards followed another letter:—

"Cradley Heath, 1*st August*, 1859.

"Sirs,—I beg respectfully to inform you that the following prices, without deduction for blast or iron cutting, will be required by your factory men for all chain made by them from 6th August inst.

"Yours truly,

"(Signed) Thomas Homer, *Secretary*."

The list of prices is inserted in Appendix II.

On receiving this notice, the masters held a meeting, and agreed neither to accept the notice nor to grant the advance. On the 6th of August the men all left, except, for some reason not explained, the men of one factory at Netherton. Summonses were taken out against them for leaving their work without notice, at Stourbridge by two firms, and at Chester by one firm alone. The masters denied that they were bound to accept notice from a man who was not in their employ, simply because he styled himself Secretary of the Union; they also denied that he was sufficiently authorized by the men. The men on the other hand asserted that they had given authority, that the notice was good, and proved that a notice from the masters, if read out in the factory and posted on the doors, was held binding on all, even on those who had neither heard it read nor were able to read it for themselves. On August 12, the Stourbridge magistrates (one of whom, it is to be observed, was himself a chain master) declared that the men were not justified in leaving their employment under the notice. No sentence, however, seems to have been given, but the man, Cox by name, was discharged on his own recognisances, on notice of an appeal being given. The other case was heard on August 23, at Hawarden, and there two men, named Ryder and Wodehouse, were sentenced to be imprisoned for fourteen days, to pay costs 8*s.* 6*d.*,

to have £4 deducted from their wages, and in default to be imprisoned for seven days. In both cases leave to appeal was given, and accordingly a special case was laid before the Court of Queen's Bench, and (to state the result before its place in order of time) on November 22, the following decision was given.

"In the Queen's Bench, Worcestershire. Thomas Cox appellant *v.* Benjamin Hingley respondent. Upon hearing counsel upon both sides, it is ordered that this case be remitted to the justices who stated the same, with the opinion of the court thereon. That the appellant was not liable to be convicted, if the said justices believed that he *bonâ fide* believed that the notice in the case mentioned was a good notice to determine the contract between him and the respondent, on the information in this case mentioned.

"Mr. Bourn for appellant, Mr. Davis for the respondent.

"By the Court."

To return to the terms demanded by the men.

The most conflicting statements were made as to the existing rate of wages, and as to the effect of the advance required. The secretary of the Union calculated the gross wages of an half-inch chain maker at 4*s.* per cwt., for six cwt. a full week's work, to be 24*s.*, but from this had to be deducted the interest of £5, the original outlay in tools, 3*s.* per week for a boy to blow and dolly, 4*s.* for firing, and 1*s.* 6*d.* for carriage and repair of tools. Thus the net wages would be 15*s.* a week; the wages of the very numerous small chain makers about 12*s.*, those of the large chain makers, who were few in number, and rarely employed above half the week, much higher; average wages below 15*s.* The masters, on the other hand, put the wages of small and half-inch chain makers from 15*s.* to 40*s.* per week, and those of the large chain makers from £3 to £4, and stated the average to be 30*s.* per week.

Again, the advance required was represented by the men to be from 5*s.* to 8*s.* per week, by the masters to be, at all events for the large cable makers, 10*s.* to 12*s.*

The masters protested against the list offered by their men, on the ground that though it purported to be a 5*s.* list, half-inch chain being paid for at 5*s.* per cwt., the prices for all other chain were really according to a 6*s.* list; and they declared themselves ready, if the men would work out a fourteen days' notice at the old prices, after that time to adopt a fair 5*s.* list, which accordingly they issued on August 29th, and which is to be found in Appendix II., placed side by side with the men's list. These terms the men declined; they would not admit the notice of their secretary invalid, and they further alleged that the prices proposed by the masters for all chain above half-inch was below the 5*s.* scale, and especially that the prices for the best qualities of chain were such that those who worked at them could not make so much by from 6*d.* to 1*s.* per day as those who worked at common chain.

The result was that at first no master but one consented to give the advance demanded by the men; and for five weeks the strike was all but general, extending to about 2000 men. After the lapse of that time, the merchants who bought from the manufacturers offered to

give their orders at the advanced price, and in some cases even to pay the wages in advance. Many of the smaller firms and some of the larger ones then received work upon the terms of the men's advance list, and by the end of the month all the masters offered to do the same. In most cases these terms were acted upon, and work resumed, but some difficulties remained, especially with regard to two great firms, the masters claiming that the men should work out a fourteen days' notice, and refusing to comply with an alleged demand of the men for the dismissal of non-unionists, or unionist defaulters, the men recriminating that the masters did not offer the 5*s*. list without deductions, and protesting that they desired the dismissal only of incompetent men. Eventually, in November, after a struggle of eighteen weeks, the men of the two factories belonging to one of the firms at Saltney and the Lye returned to work, under the condition that if the case in the Queen's Bench was decided in favour of the masters, the men of the Saltney factory should for the first fortnight receive only the prices under the 4*s*. list. The other firm, —— and Sons, who had factories at two places, still held out, for on February 20th, after a lapse of twenty-seven weeks, the men returned, on the terms of working out a fortnight's notice upon the prices of the old list, and then working at the men's advanced list. Thus the strike ended.

This severe struggle was accompanied with more than the usual acrimony. The masters impugned the honesty of the Union leaders; they accused them of clamouring for a rise of wages to be given by the masters in the factories, whilst they themselves sweated their own journeymen whom they employed at home; and of persuading the men to demand disproportionately high wages for large-cable making, just because they (the leaders) followed that craft themselves; the unionist leaders recriminated, by charging the masters with hatred and intentional injustice towards the men. Also frequent acts of violence were committed during the strike by individual operatives, both unionists and non-unionists. The common form of this was bellows cutting, which is an easy though very mean outrage. It consists in stealing by night into the shop, and with a pair of scissors cutting a hole in the bellows, which are the private property of the operative, who has to provide them for himself whether he works at home or at the factory. In February, 1859, as has been stated above, the bellows of some non-unionists were destroyed, the first of a series of outrages in that month and August: in August sixteen pairs of bellows and two horses belonging to unionists were injured, and similar cases occurred at Dudley Ward, Holly Hall, Cradley, the Lye, &c. Lately, in the present month (July, 1860), a conviction for bellows cutting has taken place at Stafford. Nor were the outrages confined to bellows cutting. There were no less than five attempts, more or less successful, to blow up whole workshops in the night: in all these more serious cases, and indeed in the far greater part of all the cases, the sufferers were those who had incurred the enmity of the Union. The motive of

the unionists to commit these crimes was obviously to punish all schismatics against their order; that of the non-unionists is not so clear, possibly class hostility, but more probably personal retaliation. The leaders of each party charged the leaders of the other party with instigating these acts of violence, but the charge was never substantiated, and is doubtless untrue. Still, it cannot be questioned that some more active step than mere verbal repudiation could and should be taken. Both parties, masters and men, unionists or non-unionists, should combine to repress acts which are a dishonour to the whole trade, and which injure those the most whom they are intended to serve. One plan may be here suggested, to offer for every conviction for bellows cutting or other trade outrage a reward to be paid half by the masters, half by the Union of the district.

Sufficient information has not been received to estimate the cost of this strike. For the first five weeks the strike was general, so that from fifteen hundred to three thousand men were thrown out of work. Then most of the masters gave in, but the two principal firms held out, so that upwards of three hundred men remained for many weeks on strike. To each of these were paid 7*s.* per week; and to others, about seventy, out of employ not owing to the strike, 5*s.* This alone caused an expenditure of more than £100 per week.

To meet this large outlay, as soon as work recommenced, *i.e.* after the first five weeks of the strike, a levy of 2*s.* per week was raised on all in employment, a very heavy tax upon those who worked only on American traces, or the very small chains, and earned little more than 6*s.* per week. This levy raised about £80 per week for three weeks; after that it was reduced to 8*d.* per week for three more weeks; then raised to 10*d.* for one week, and since that time it has been 6*d.* per week. The whole sums thus raised defrayed about nineteen-twentieths of the total expense. The remaining one-twentieth was contributed from without, in small and large sums. Amongst them may be mentioned £6 5*s.* 8*d.* from the Glasgow harness makers, £30 from the amalgamated engineers, 3*d.* weekly per man from the Stourbridge glasscutters, the same from the spademakers. But their strongest friends were the chain makers in the North, allied to them not only by community of calling, but by interest, for they intended, if the strike in the South was successful, themselves to strike for an increase of wages, in order to maintain their relative superiority of wages. Accordingly, as soon as the strike was announced, they resolved to increase the weekly subscriptions amongst themselves to 1*s.* 6*d.* per head, and in order to carry this out more effectually, established fortnightly meetings of council, and published in the Journal the names of all defaulters to the amount of 5*s.* and upwards. Also, on August 21st, they despatched their leading man, Mr. Blake, to aid by his counsel the Staffordshire men; and he took with him £50 as a first instalment; on September 27th they sent a further sum of £70, and finally one of £100.

Some few observations may be offered on this strike. It was a strike for an advance of wages, yet no agreement could be come to

between the parties either as to what was the average amount of existing wages—the men putting it at less than 15*s.* per week, the masters at 30*s.*—or as to the extent of the advance demanded, the masters estimating it from 10*s.* to 12*s.* for all the higher labourers, the men from 5*s.* to 8*s.* Now it is clear, to remove all doubt of these questions would have been the first step in any rational settlement of the dispute. It is equally clear that it lay with the masters to do this: they had only to throw their books open to the inspection of some impartial person, and it might have been ascertained beyond question what was the average rate of wages, and what, according to the average amount of work done, would be the effect of the proposed increase. This they did not do.

Judged by the result, the strike seems justifiable. The men were successful; the only point on which they yielded was that they had to work out another notice. And this they ought to have yielded long before. The substantial fruits having been won, it was foolish obstinacy to stickle for the formal recognition of their Union by the masters. For the same reason, the pride of the masters which refused to make this recognition seems to me unworthy of them; and their conduct in the first instance—viz. the raising a mere technical objection to a notice they thoroughly understood, and attempting upon it to throw the men into prison—seems to me tactics far from honourable, if the proper view of a strike is, not that it is a conspiracy against the masters, but a suspension of business until the buyers and sellers of labour can arrange the terms of their bargain.

The amount gained by the strike was per man at least 5*s.* per week, and to the operative of the higher class, according to the masters' representation, 10*s.* to 12*s.* (a most considerable rise), *and, according to the representation of the masters also, there was nothing in the then state of the iron trade to account for any rise.* The obvious conclusion is, that the wages had been for months far below that which the laws of political economy, weighing the supply and demand of labour, would fix as the proper market wages, and that it required a strike to set these laws or tendencies in motion. And whatever was the cost of this strike, it was speedily repaid, and far more than repaid, by the gain of 5*s.* per week to each of the chain makers, in number between 2000 and 3000.

Lastly, the result of the strike is stated by one of the papers to have established a much better feeling between master and man.

APPENDIX I.

Scale of Day's Work as adopted in the Factory of Abbott and Co.

SIDE WORK.		SHORT LINK END WORK.			STUD CHAIN.		
Inch.	Links.	Inch.	Yards.	Links.	Inch.	Yards.	Links.
1¼	84	1¼	7	2	1 3/16	9½	0
1 5/16	78	1 3/16	7½	2	1¼	10	0
1⅛	72	1⅛	8	2	1 1/16	10½	0
1 7/16	67	1 1/16	8	3	1	11	0
1 1/16	62	1	8½	3	15/16	11	0
1 9/16	57	15/16	9	0	⅞	12	0
1⅝	47	⅞	9½	0	13/16	1 length is 2½ days' work.	
1 11/16	44	13/16	Two lengths per week.		¾	Ditto.	
1¾	38	11/16	Ditto.		11/16	Ditto.	
1 13/16	35	⅝	Two lengths, six yds., ditto.		⅝	Ditto.	
1⅞	40	9/16	25*s.* per week at present prices.				
1 15/16	38	½					
2	35	7/16					
2 1/16	30	⅜					
2¼	25	5/16	24*s.* per week at present prices.				
		¼					
		3/16					

Double-handed, *i.e.*, working with two strikers.

APPENDIX II.

Five Shilling List proposed by the Men on August 6th.

Size.	Common.		Best.		Best best.		Stud.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
¼ inch.	11	0	14	4	16	2		
5/16 ,,	9	8	12	2	13	6		
⅜ ,,	7	4	9	0	10	2		
7/16 ,,	6	0	7	8	8	2		
½ ,,	4	8	5	5	6	2		
9/16 ,,	3	9	4	6	5	2		
⅝ ,,	3	5	4	2	4	10		
11/16 ,,	3	2	3	10	...	...	3	0
¾ ,,	2	8	3	2	...	...	2	5
13/16 ,,	2	6	3	0	...	...	2	3
⅞ ,,	2	4	2	10	...	...	2	1
15/16 ,,	2	2	2	8	...	...	2	0
1 ,,	2	0	2	6	...	...	1	10
1 1/16 ,,	1	11	2	5	...	...	1	8
1⅛ ,,	1	10	2	4	...	...	1	7
1 3/16 ,,	1	10	2	4	...	...	1	6
1¼ ,,	1	10	2	4	...	...	1	5

1/16 size and smaller to be made with bellows.
⅛ ditto and larger with blast.
All stud chain required to stand extra test, 2*d.* per cwt. extra.

Workmen's Prices, agreed to by the Chain Masters, at a General Meeting held at Dudley, August 29th, 1859.

OUT-MEN'S LIST.

PRICES OF SHORT LINKED.						DITTO STUDDED.		DITTO BEST SHORT LINKED.					
				s.	d.							s.	d.	
No.	5	Chain...		24	0	per cwt.		No.	5	Chain...		28	0	per cwt.
,,	4	,,	...	19	0	,,		,,	4	,,	...	21	0	,,
,,	3	,,	...	16	0	,,		,,	3	,,	...	18	0	,,
,,	2	,,	...	13	0	,,		,,	2	,,	...	15	0	,,
,,	1	,,	...	11	6	,,		,,	1	,,	...	13	6	,,
	$\frac{5}{16}$	,,	...	10	0	,,			$\frac{5}{16}$	,,	...	12	0	,,
	$\frac{11}{32}$	,,	...	9	0	,,			$\frac{11}{32}$	,,	...	11	0	,,
	$\frac{3}{8}$	,,	...	8	0	,,			$\frac{3}{8}$	,,	...	9	6	,,
	$\frac{7}{16}$	bare	...	7	4	,,			$\frac{7}{16}$	bare	...	8	4	,,
	$\frac{7}{16}$	inch	...	6	4	,,			$\frac{7}{16}$	inch	...	7	4	,,
	$\frac{1}{2}$	bare	...	5	10	,,			$\frac{1}{2}$	bare	...	6	10	,,
	$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	...	5	0	,,	4	9	$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	...	6	0	,,
	$\frac{9}{16}$	,,	...	4	4	,,	4	1	$\frac{9}{16}$	,,	...	5	2	,,
	$\frac{5}{8}$	,,	...	4	0	,,	3	9	$\frac{5}{8}$	,,	...	4	6	,,
	$\frac{11}{16}$	,,	...	3	8	,,	3	5	$\frac{11}{16}$	,,	...	4	2	,,
	$\frac{3}{4}$	,,	...	3	5	,,	3	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	,,	...	3	11	,,
	$\frac{13}{16}$	,,	...	3	2	,,	2	11	$\frac{13}{16}$	,,	...	3	8	,,
	$\frac{7}{8}$	,,	...	2	11	,,	2	8	$\frac{7}{8}$	,,	...	3	4	,,
	$\frac{15}{16}$	,,	...	2	8	,,	2	5	$\frac{15}{16}$	,,	...	3	0	,,
	1	,,	...	2	6	,,	2	4	1	,,	...	2	9	,,
	$1\frac{1}{16}$	,,	...	2	5	,,	2	3	$1\frac{1}{16}$	,,	...	2	8	,,
	$1\frac{1}{8}$	,,	...	2	4	,,	2	2	$1\frac{1}{8}$	,,	...	2	7	,,
	$1\frac{3}{16}$	&	larger	2	3	,,	2	1	$1\frac{3}{16}$	&	larger	2	6	,,

FACTORY LIST, WHERE MACHINERY IS USED FOR BLAST AND IRON CUTTING.

PRICES OF SHORT LINKED.						DITTO STUDDED.		DITTO BEST SHORT LINKED.					
				s.	d.							s.	d.	
$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	bare	chain	4	4	per cwt.		$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	bare	chain	5	2	per cwt.
$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	chain	...	3	6	,,	3	$\frac{1}{2}$	inch	chain	...	4	8	,,
$\frac{9}{16}$	,,	,,	...	3	1	,,	2	$\frac{9}{16}$	,,	,,	...	3	9	,,
$\frac{5}{8}$	,,	,,	...	2	9	,,	2	$\frac{5}{8}$	,,	,,	...	3	4	,,
$\frac{11}{16}$	,,	,,	...	2	6	,,	2	$\frac{11}{16}$	,,	,,	...	3	0	,,
$\frac{3}{4}$	,,	,,	...	2	4	,,	2	$\frac{3}{4}$	,,	,,	...	2	8	,,
$\frac{13}{16}$	,,	,,	...	2	$2\frac{1}{2}$	,,	2	$\frac{13}{16}$	,,	,,	...	2	6	,,
$\frac{7}{8}$	,,	,,	...	2	1	,,	1	$\frac{7}{8}$	,,	,,	...	2	4	,,
$\frac{15}{16}$	,,	,,	...	1	11	,,	1	$\frac{15}{16}$	,,	,,	...	2	2	,,
1	,,	,,	...	1	9	,,	1	1	,,	,,	...	2	0	,,
$1\frac{1}{16}$	,,	,,	...	1	8	,,	1	$1\frac{1}{16}$	,,	,,	...	1	11	,,
$1\frac{1}{8}$	,,	,,	...	1	8	,,	1	$1\frac{1}{8}$	,,	,,	...	1	11	,,
$1\frac{3}{16}$	,,	,,	...	1	7	,,	1	$1\frac{3}{16}$	,,	,,	...	1	10	,,
$1\frac{1}{4}$	and	larger	...	1	7	,,	1	$1\frac{1}{4}$	and	larger	...	1	10	,,

FACTORY LIST, WHERE NO MACHINERY IS USED.

Prices of Short Linked.		Ditto Studded.		Ditto Best Short Linked.		
	s. *d.*	*s.* *d.*		*s.* *d.*		
½ inch bare chain	4 7 per cwt.		½ inch bare chain	5 5 per cwt.		
½ inch chain ...	3 9 ,,	3 6	½ inch chain ...	4 6 ,,		
9/16 ,, ,, ...	3 5 ,,	3 3	9/16 ,, ,, ...	4 2 ,,		
⅝ ,, ,, ...	3 1 ,,	3 0	⅝ ,, ,, ...	3 9 ,,		
11/16 ,, ,, ...	2 10 ,,	2 9	11/16 ,, ,, ...	3 5 ,,		
¾ ,, ,, ...	2 9 ,,	2 7	¾ ,, ,, ...	3 1 ,,		
13/16 ,, ,, ...	2 7 ,,	2 4	13/16 ,, ,, ...	2 10 ,,		
⅞ ,, ,, ...	2 5 ,,	2 2	⅞ ,, ,, ...	2 8 ,,		
15/16 ,, ,, ...	2 2 ,,	1 11	15/16 ,, ,, ...	2 5 ,,		
1 ,, ,, ...	2 0 ,,	1 9	1 ,, ,, ...	2 3 ,,		
1 1/16 ,, ,, ...	1 11 ,,	1 8	1 1/16 ,, ,, ...	2 2 ,,		
1⅛ ,, ,, ...	1 11 ,,	1 8	1⅛ ,, ,, ...	2 2 ,,		
1 3/16 ,, ,, ...	1 10 ,,	1 7	1 3/16 ,, ,, ...	2 1 ,,		
1¼ and larger ...	1 9 ,,	1 6	1¼ and larger ...	2 1 ,,		
Subject to Ordinary Proof.			Subject to Best Proof.			

ALL THE ABOVE ARE NET PRICES.

APPENDIX III.

Answers by a Chain making Firm, delivered during the Strike, to the Questions submitted by the Committee.

1. We are manufacturers of iron, also chains, chain-cables, and anchors.
2. We usually employ about 1000 men.
3. Our men are paid in cash every Saturday, and (with the exception of day-labourers, at 2*s.* 6*d.* per day) almost invariably by the piece.
4. The chain makers only amongst our workmen are members of a trade society; they number about 200.
5. Chain makers are all skilled workmen.
6. The unionists consist of those men who are least attentive to work.
7. We have been interfered with by the trade union many times with reference to wages. At the present time, our chain makers are on strike to enforce a new scale of wages, made entirely by the Society, without the sanction of the masters.
8. Men employed in ironworks, and who are none of them members of trades' unions, are, as a class, more attentive to work, of better character, and in a far better social position than the chain makers, who are all society men.
10. If one man was paid higher wages than the others, although as a workman of greater value, all would demand the same.
11. There have been many strikes of our men, because we have employed those who either did not belong to the Union, or who refused or neglected to pay the levies to the Society. In one year, 1850, the society men struck three times from the above cause, the strikes lasting eight months; and this had the effect of breaking up the Union, which has now been lately revived.
12. Piecework is general.
13. Machinery to perform nearly half the labour has been introduced: but the society men strive to obtain all the benefit, by seeking to obtain the same rate of wages as was paid before the introduction of machinery.
14. We have often suffered serious loss from being unable to complete contracts on account of the strikes of the men, and have several times deferred entering into contracts for the same reason.
15. Trade societies do not, in our opinion, develop a healthy public opinion amongst the men, but, on the contrary, have a levelling tendency.

16. The smaller manufacturers have, since the breaking up of the Union in 1850, oppressed the men in their employ, and reduced the scale of wages to a very low figure. These men do not work in bodies, but have shops attached to their cottages, in which themselves and families work; and we do not think they could protect themselves without combination; but men working in factories in large bodies can always secure a fair rate of wages without being society men.

17. There is no combination of employers in our trade.

21. Always in busy times the Society has demanded, and sometimes obtained, a very extravagant rate of wages.

22. When the demand is brisk, wages have always naturally risen without the intervention of a society or strike.

Since answering question No. 11, we have been informed of the following fact. A chain manufacturer in this neighbourhood has given notice to the Union that he is prepared to accede to their demands as regards the scale of wages; but as he has had one man at work in his factory for the last six weeks who has refused to join the Society, they will not allow any of his men to resume work until the non-society man has been discharged. This has occurred this week.

A. B.

September 21*st*, 1859.

Nearly ten years ago, in consequence of the serious injury we experienced in our trade through the union of the chain makers causing frequent strikes, we adopted the expedient of employing a number of apprentices (about seventy), and we built a new factory for them to work in; these apprentices were bound to us for a term of years in the usual form, and although we had great difficulty in carrying out the scheme, in protecting the hands while at work, and in other ways, we succeeded by these means in causing in a great measure the break-up of the Union. Since that time we have been to a certain extent free from the ruinous losses caused by strikes which until then we experienced. Within the present year, however, the Union has been revived, and the result is that all the chain makers in this district are now on strike for an advance of wages. The men have been out for nine weeks, and although the state of trade does not warrant any advance of wages, the masters have done all in their power to meet the wishes of the men. An advance of about twenty per cent. on their wages has been offered to them but refused, and even many of the masters have agreed to give them the wages they demand; these offers have been met by the Union with requisitions that such masters as have employed during the strike non-society men, be fined one pound per week for every week such man has worked, and also that they be remunerated for loss of time, &c. To demands such as these the masters cannot accede, and as the Union declare their intention of enforcing them, the result remains to be seen.

The men while on strike are supported partly by their own Union; we see also by the newspapers that they have received contributions from the Chain Makers' Union in the north, to the extent of about fifty pounds per week, also some trifling contributions from other societies in the district; the whole, when apportioned, brings to each man on strike no more than about two shillings per week, and the men are consequently obliged to disperse through the neighbouring country begging, in order to keep themselves and families from starvation.

Chain makers are paid high rates of wages, many (according to the description of chain they make) being able to earn, in a good time of trade, three or four pounds per week each, others not so much, the average perhaps being about thirty shillings per week; they are, however, as a class, very degraded in their habits, spending the bulk of their wages in drink, their houses being in a most filthy condition, and their wives and children in rags. There are of course many among them to whom these remarks do not apply, but they are in most cases opposed to the Union, or only join it through terror. Such men generally work in shops attached to their houses, and of necessity blow their fires with bellows (in large factories machinery has been substituted); when these men offend the Union in any way, their bellows are sure to be cut to pieces during some succeeding night. During the seven years previous to 1850, and the last two years,

hundreds of pairs have been so destroyed. Although in many cases the men threatened have watched their shops for months together, the men employed by the Union have generally succeeded; those people who know and might inform against the depredators, are either connected with the Union, or in fear of it.

A. B.

October 7th, 1859.

APPENDIX IV.

THE CHAIN MAKERS' JOURNAL AND TRADES' CIRCULAR.

"It is to labour and labour only that man owes everything possessed of exchangeable value. Labour is the talisman that has raised him from the condition of the savage; that has changed the desert and the forest into cultivated fields, that has covered the earth with cities and the ocean with ships, that has given us plenty, comfort, and elegance; instead of want, misery, and barbarism."—*M'Culloch.*

THE CAUSES THAT REGULATE THE PRICE OF LABOUR.

Paper III.

How often do we see the shallow and supercilious—who have secured for themselves by trade, or who have been fortunate enough to inherit, a large amount of property or wealth—look down upon the honest workman with a certain amount of disdain. Poor creatures! Themselves of little value to the interests of humanity or the progress of the world, their pride and prejudice prevents them from recognising in the workman the founder of society, the substratum of social prosperity. Nevertheless the fact remains; and good men everywhere, of whatever rank or station, watch with interest the endeavours of the labourer to inform and instruct his class; to increase their self-respect by showing their utility; to decrease their poverty by analysing their condition and unfolding its causes; and, above all, to show the connexion and relation between labour and capital.

Labour is the arch and capital, the keystone of society. The comforts, necessaries, elegances, and luxuries of life, are all upheld by it. The great mass of mankind live by the reward of their labour, viz., wages. What then is the connexion and relation between it and capital? *"The relation between capital and wages is direct. The accumulation of capital generally leads to an increase in wages. If, however, the population of a country increase with an equal ratio with capital, wages will remain stationary. If the population outstrip capital, wages will decrease. If capital outstrip population, wages will rise. It follows from this that the material prosperity of a country depends upon the gradual increase of its capital. It is a prime necessity, but not the prime necessity of society: that is labour. 'Without capital,' says M. Michel Chevalier, 'all that men can produce, in exempting themselves from labour, is a larger dish for themselves.' Without labour man could not do that. Labour constitutes the first necessity of both savage and civilized life. Capital consists in the accumulated labour, the useful inventions, and the acquired skill handed down to us from the past. Labour can exist without capital—capital owes its existence to labour. But it would seem only a small proportion of this goes to pay wages. They are what is left after rent and profit are apportioned.

"'The demand for those who live by wages, cannot increase but in proportion to the increase of the funds which are destined to the payment of wages. Those funds are of two kinds; first, the revenue which is over and abovewhat is necessary for the maintenance; and, secondly, the stock which is over and above what is necessary for the employment of their masters. . . . The demand for those who live by wages, therefore, naturally increases with the increase of national wealth, and cannot possibly increase without it.'—ADAM SMITH.

"'By what law are wages regulated in lands where labour is free?' asks M. Chevalier. 'By the abundance of capital compared with the number of labourers who require epmloyment,' is the answer.

* People's Press.

"Frederic Bastiat, in his 'Sophismes Economiques,' defines wages by implication, as a 'remuneration governed by the general rate of profits.' John Stuart Mill, in his 'Principles of Political Economy,' says:—'It is not the absolute amount of accumulation or of production that is of importance to the labouring class: it is not the amount even of the funds destined for distribution among the labourers; it is the proportion between those funds and the numbers among whom they are shared. The condition of the class can be bettered in no other way than by altering that proportion to their advantage; and every scheme for their benefit, which does not proceed on this as its foundation, is, for all practical purposes, a delusion.'

"These quotations sufficiently indicate the source whence all improvement in wages must be derived—namely, from the increase of capital.

"Practically wages consist of that remuneration without which men would not work. Exactly that amount of money or goods which enables an employer to obtain a command over a certain portion of the time and ability of a workman: that is wages. Not how much is he worth, but for how little *must* he work is the consideration governing the employer. Wages then, practically, are portions of a certain outlay which the capitalist is compelled to make, in order that his capital may be employed and return him a certain profit."

COUNCIL MEETING.

The regular council meeting was held at the Globe Inn, Clayton Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, on Saturday, April 2nd.

The following delegates were present:—ABBOT'S, Charles Blake, Nicholas Vallans, and William Walles; HAWKS', Robert Laidler and Robert Hunter; LUMSDON'S, Sunderland, Donkin Allen; SUNDERLAND, South side, William Orton; SHIELD'S, St. Peter's, William Scott; NORTH SHIELDS, Thomas Atkinson; WINLATON, M. McOlvin; and George Ridley, Treasurer. Several other gentlemen were also present and took part in the proceedings.

The following is the monthly account of income and expenditure:—

CR. ACCOUNT—Hartlepool, 16*s.*; Shield's, St. Peter's, £2 9*s.* 6*d.*; do. funeral, 6*d.*; Nicholson's, 10*s.*; Clay's, 7*s.* 1½*d.*; Wight's, 4*s.* 6*d.*; Lumsdon's, £2 14*s.* 9*d*; Scott's, 13*s.* 0*d.*; Abbot's, £7 1*s.* 3*d.*; Hawk's, £4 3*s.* 3*d.*; do. funeral, 1*s.* 6*d.*; North Shields, £2 17*s.* 0*d.*; do. funeral, 6*d.*; Winlaton, 17*s.* 0*d.*; in treasurer's hands, March 5th, £9 11*s.* 2*d.*; in Lambton's bank, £85 0*s.* 0*d.*; Total, £117 7*s.* 6½*d.*

DR. ACCOUNT—In Lambton and Co.'s bank, £85 0*s.* 0*d.*; in treasurer's hands, £10 19*s.* 1½*d.*; journals (500 copies), £2 5*s.* 0*d.*; expenses of council meeting, April 2nd, 17*s.* 0*d.*; postage stamps on hand, 7*s.* 5*d.*; expenses of delegates to Shields, Sunderland, Winlaton, and in paying Pow's men, £1 16*s.* 0*d.*; paid to the Glassmakers, March 12th, £1 0*s.* 0*d.*; paid Pow's men, March 12th, £3 12*s.* 0*d.*; paid Mr. Siddaway to go to Staffordshire, £3 13*s* 0*d.*; paid to the Glassmakers, March 18th, £1 0*s.* 0*d.*; paid Pow's men, March 18th, £1 16*s.* 0*d.*; paid to Glassmakers, March 26th, £1 0*s.* 0*d.*; paid to Pow's men, March 26th, £1 16*s.* 0*d.*; paid to Glassmakers, April 2nd, £1 0*s.* 0*d.*; paid Pow's men, April 2nd, £1 16*s.* 0*d.* Total, £117 7*s.* 6½*d.*

The chairman (Mr. Robert Laidler) opened the business of the meeting, which he said was most important.

Mr. Blake then gave a short description of the visit of a deputation to Messrs. Tyzack and Co. of North Shields; and stated that the appointment of a deputation to visit Staffordshire was one of the measures proposed.

Mr. Walie then stated that Mr. Brown, the managing partner of Abbot and Co., had stated to his side-welders that a reduction in the price of manufacturing those kinds of chain ought to be made.

A lengthened discussion ensued upon this, in which Messrs. Hunter, Atkinson, McOlvin, Allen, and other delegates took part, all in opposition to any reduction, and it was agreed, on the motion of Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Vallans, that Abbot's side-welders wait upon Mr. Brown on the first opportunity, and to endeavour to bring matters to an amicable issue.

It was thought necessary that a delegate be appointed to visit Glasgow, to inquire into the position of the chain makers in that town; and Mr. Geo. Ridley was unanimously elected to go there, with full power to use his discretion as to whether he went before the next Council meeting, according to certain eventualities which were likely to transpire.

Mr. Blake was appointed to visit Staffordshire, and also to wait upon several employers in the trade.

Reports were then given of the position of the glassmakers upon strike, to whom the Union was making a small contribution.

Pow's discharged men were also reported upon.

A circular was read which it was proposed to circulate extensively in every maritime port of importance, both at home and abroad, showing the great mischief that has arisen from the use of inferior chain for shipping purposes. It was resolved to postpone its issue until Mr. Blake returned from the South.

A great deal of other business of a minor character was disposed of, and, after the treasurer had received authority to draw upon the bankers of the Union for necessary expenses, the meeting terminated with a vote of thaks to the chairman.

LIST OF NON-UNION MEN IN THE TRADE.

The great regard these men have for their own interests, and those of their families, prevents their paying threepence per week for the purpose of improving the position of the trade. They cannot see any benefit derived from Union. In this free land, we are proud that every man can do as he likes, so long as he does not injure his neighbour, but their conduct will long be remembered.

HAWKS', Gateshead.—A. B., five in number.

SUNDERLAND.—C. D., eleven in number.

POW'S, North Shields.—E. F., nineteen in number.

RAILWAY SHOPS, Gateshead.—G., one.

REPORT OF THE CHAIN TRADE.

The chain trade still remains in a depressed condition. The following is the report:—

ABBOT'S, Gateshead.—Large side welders, seven days; small side welders, eleven days; large end welders, fifteen days; small chain makers, nine days.

SHIELDS', St. Peter's.—The average of all sizes about twenty days.

HAWKS', Gateshead.—Large side welders, seventeen days; small do., fifteen days; large end welders, fourteen days; small do., fifteen days; small chain makers, twelve days.

TYZACK'S, North Shields.—Those making under ¾ in. eight days; the larger sizes six days.

LUMSDON'S, Sunderland (North side).—Side men, twenty days; end men, eighteen days.

SCOTT'S, Sunderland (North side).—The average of all sizes, ten days.

NICHOLSON'S, Sunderland (South side).—Large men, twenty days; small men, full time.

CLAY'S, Sunderland (South side).—Large chain makers, twenty days; small do., sixteen days.

WIGHT'S, Sunderland (South side).—All sizes, sixteen days.

WINLATON.—Full employment, except two hawser makers, who have had twelve days.

INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL.

Generally trade is steadily improving; and the inquiry for money is more active, although at times it varies in character. The rate is firm at 2½ per cent. . . .

The freighting engagements of the last fortnight have been limited in most trades, although we can scarcely note a declension in the Mediterranean homeward rates, a certain languor pervades the market. A decided increase outward, however, is apparent, with a large business current, and generally the export traders depended upon by owners. . . .

The accounts of the trade and navigation of the United Kingdom for the month of February, which have been issued by the Board of Trade, show a considerable increase in both exports and imports, as compared with the corresponding period of last year. . . .

The declared value of exports of British produce and manufactures during the month was £9,614,143 against £7,288,416 in the corresponding period of last year, and £9,434,040 in that of 1857. The value of the principal metals was as follows:—

	Month ended Feb. 28,		
	1857.	1858.	1859.
Machinery: steam engines...	104,068	76,798	43,886
Other sorts	141,800	180,160	129,412
Metals: pig iron	86,809	47,887	46,264
Bar and rod iron	200,217	124,372	160,490
Railway iron	292,252	153,696	158,402
Cast iron	62,488	58,778	50,488
Wrought iron	219,014	140,146	189,627

The *Times'* report from Birmingham on the state of the iron trade in that district says:—Although the trade has gradually improved, the aggregate demand for finished iron during the current quarter has not justified the sanguine anticipations entertained by the manufacturers in December. A very large amount of sheets produced in the district are consumed in the cut-nail trade, and the demand for nail sheets has been tolerably good through the quarter, and large quantities have been shipped to Canada, but the falling off in the demand for all other kinds of iron for the United States, the Mediterranean, and the great ship-building establishments on the Clyde, and other parts of the United Kingdom, has unquestionably falsified in a great degree the expectations expressed at the commencement of the quarter. In Birmingham the workshops are, for the most part, fairly employed, and factors' orders on the increase.

From Glasgow we learn that the increase of 136,000 tons in the stock of pig iron in 1858, combined with the apprehensions of a continental war, caused, at the opening of the year, extensive operations for a fall, but the stock is now decreasing at the rate of 2,000 tons weekly, and, with the general belief that the result of the Congress of European powers will be the maintenance of peace, a much larger demand has arisen, advancing the rates nearly two shillings per ton. But, apart from any political event that may interpose to mar the prospects, the trade more than confirms the anticipations formed of it, before the close of 1858, and is showing signs of activity concurrently with the expanding commerce of the country.

The preliminary meeting of the Staffordshire and Worcestershire iron masters was held in Birmingham on March 31st, and the prices of last quarter were fully maintained, but there was no attempt at an advance. The trade was described as rather flat, and not so brisk as was anticipated at the Christmas meeting. Little doubt was, however, expressed that, as a war on the Continent was at present improbable, a good export trade might be expected during the summer months. The home demand for manufactured iron was improving, although still limited.

Strikes prevail in various trades. The glassmakers are still standing firm, and several large firms in the South of England have given way; and, upon the whole, the men seem as resolute and determined as ever.

In Rochdale a number of piecers and doffers, at the Sparth Bottoms Mill, belonging to Messrs A. Brierley and Sons, have turned out for an advance of wages. The result was, that the whole of the other hands (upwards of 400) had to cease work. The doffers at the mill of Messrs. Chadwick also turned out. At the Messrs. Howard's mill an advance was demanded without notice, at the close of last week, it being known that the firm were executing some urgent contracts. The employers yielded to an advance, but reserved the right to take it back when trade should again be bad.

In the Midland Counties the shoemakers are still foolishly striking against the introduction of machinery. The latest accounts say they are still leaving the town (Stafford), and a considerable number of females (binders) have also gone during

the week to Cheltenham, Nantwich, &c. The manufacturers continue united, and at their meetings, held twice every week, the utmost firmness of purpose is evinced. A report from Stafford says :—"We were this morning shown a boot made entirely by machinery, the soles being sprigged on and fastened by a machine made for the purpose. This specimen of workmanship is tolerably well executed, and as the machine becomes more fully developed and adapted to its peculiar work, it will no doubt produce goods of a vastly superior quality. Another machine has also been invented, which, by an ingenious contrivance, fastens the bottoms and heels on by means of brass screws, the soles possessing the same elasticity as those made up in the ordinary way by manual labour. The application of machines to the manufacture of boots and shoes will undoubtedly produce a complete revolution in the boot and shoe trade, and a largely increased production will enable enterprising persons to extend, to an almost unlimited degree, the export trade in this necessary article of daily use. It must not be supposed, however, that these machines will supersede the necessity of manual labour—both must be united in order to suit the tastes and supply the demands of all classes."

The sickle-makers at Hackenworth, near Sheffield, who are upon strike for an advance of wages, are continuing the struggle which has lasted five months with great loss to both masters and men, the latter still refuse to resume work except upon their own terms, which are five per cent. up to August next, and ten per cent. afterwards. The manufacturers have offered an advance of five per cent., which has been refused.

The Legislature have two bills under consideration—"The Masters and Operatives' Bill," and the "Combination Bill"—with a view to render settlements between employers and employed more easy, but the "dissolution" stops the progress of legislation on social matters. We are not able to report as to whether these bills are calculated to promote the objects they profess to seek, but as soon as they have reached a more advanced stage we will examine their provisions.

The coal and iron trades in the North remain in a similar state as that given by our last report.

The following are the prices of iron in the London market, March 31 :—Bars, &c. (British), per ton, £8 10*s.* to £9 ; nail rods, £7 15*s.* to £8 5*s.*; hoops, £9 to £9 10*s.*; sheets, £9 to £9 15*s.*; pig, No. 1, in Wales, £3 15*s.*; bars, &c., £6 2*s.* 6*d.* to £6 7*s.* 6*d.*; rails, £6 15*s.*; pig, M. N., in Glasgow, £2 12*s.* 6*d.* to £2 12*s.* 9*d.*; Swedish, in London, £12 5*s.* to £13 5*s.*

EXPORTS OF CHAINS AND ANCHORS FROM NEWCASTLE.

Total of anchors and chains exported from Newcastle-on-Tyne for the month ending January 31st, 1859 :—

	tons.	cwt.	qr.	lb.
Chains	109	11	1	23
Anchors	24	8	2	6
Grand total of anchors and chains...	134	0	1	1

FEBRUARY, 1859.

Feb. 1st.—*Speculation*, Schacks, Wismar, Anchors, cwt. 65 0 0—Shield, Hood, and Co.

Feb. 3rd.—*Emerenta*, Daird, Rostock, Chains, cwt. 254 2 24, Anchors, cwt. 47 2 9—Tyzack and Co.

Feb. 5th.—*Zelta Margaretta*, Buss, Brake, Chains, cwt. 60 0 0, Anchors, cwt. 14 0 0—Shield, Hood, and Co.; Chains, cwt. 305 0 0, Anchors, cwt. 67 0 0—Tyzack and Co.

Feb. 7th.— *Lord Raglan*, Hart, Rotterdam, Chains, cwt. 177 0 0, Anchors, cwt. 28 3 0—Abbot and Co.; *Ahte*, Ojiust, New York, Chains, cwt. 385 0 25—Pow and Co.

Feb. 14th.—*Chevy Chase*, Taylor, Hamburg, Chains, cwt 84 0 26, Anchors, cwt. 16 0 11—Hawks and Co.

Feb. 16th.—*Lord Raglan*, Hart, Rotterdam, Anchors, cwt. 20 0 0—Abbot and Co.; Chains, cwt. 40 0 0—Shield, Hood, and Co.

Feb. 19th—*Patrician*, Simpson, Genoa, Chains, tons 20 9 2 15—Pow and Co.

Feb. 22nd.—*Otter*, Lishman, Hamburg, Anchors, cwt. 3 0 0—Abbot and Co.; Chains, cwt. 269 0 12, Anchors, cwt. 48 1 10—Pow and Co.; Chains, cwt. 84 0 12—Pow and Co.

Feb. 26th.—*Champion*, Raison, Harlingen, Chains, cwt. 134 0 4, Anchors, cwt. 18 2 20—Pow and Co.

	tons.	cwt.	qr.	lb.
Total of anchors	15	18	1	12
Total of chains	110	8	0	8
Grand total of anchors and chains...	126	1	1	20

APPENDIX V.

Principal Rules of the Chain and Trace Makers' Anti-Truck and Price-Protective Association. Founded in 1844.

Rule 2. No member shall work for any master who trucks any of his workmen, but shall immediately give notice to the secretary of any attempt to enforce truck. Penalty for breach, 5*s*.

Rule 3. Every master shall give, and every member demand, a similar price for a similar quality of work. Penalty for breach, 5*s*.

Rules 8, 11, 15. Members not to be allowed to make finishing work, or to prepare tools for non-members; or to lend them their own tools, under penalties of 5*s*. to 40*s*. Are bound to strike against any employer refusing to discharge a member who receives truck, or works under price; and no other member to take the place of those striking, under penalties from 10*s*. to £5.

Rule 9. That when any employer's men are authorized to give notice for an advance of wages, or on any other account, the general meeting or the delegates who authorize them shall specify what notice shall be given, at the expiration of which the men must immediately strike, unless their employers comply.

Rule 4. That a fund be raised in order to support the members when on strike, &c., towards which (unless a heavy strike be pending) each male member above nineteen years of age shall contribute 6*d*. per week, and women and children 3*d*.

Rule 5. Strike-allowance to be 10*s*. per week for each adult male member, 5*s*. for other members, and 1*s*. for each child not able to work.

Rule 12. None to become members except those apprenticed according to rule.

Rule 13. That the female members, who marry workmen of other trades, shall not teach their husbands nor their children whilst their husbands live, nor shall they have any apprentice or journeyman.

Rule 14. That no member shall be allowed more than one apprentice; that no person be allowed any apprentice unless he has worked at the trade twenty years; that no person who has more than two children under twenty-one years of age working at the trade with him, have any apprentice. Each member having an apprentice to pay to the Society £5, or £2 10*s*. if he has worked thirty years. No sum, however, is demanded from those who have worked forty years, and have had no child or apprentice at the trade. Apprentices in every instance to be bound according to law.

ACCOUNT

OF THE

LOCK-OUT OF ENGINEERS, &c.,

IN 1851-2.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By THOMAS HUGHES,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

THE sources from which this account has been compiled, are: 1st, the accounts of proceedings and meetings, published at the time in the newspapers; 2dly, the circulars and addresses published at the time by the Amalgamated Society and the Employers' Association; 3dly, Reports and other documents of the Amalgamated Society entrusted to me by the secretary; 4thly, my own recollections of the dispute.

I have endeavoured to state the case as fairly as possible, and I believe that every statement of fact will be found to be strictly true. Of course, however, when one has been behind the scenes on one side of a dispute, and not on the other, one must always have misgivings. This is the case with me; and though I have had before my eyes all the time, the danger of favouring that side which has done all in its power to give me help and information, and have been proportionately anxious to state everything which the employers might wish to have stated, it is quite possible that I may have overlooked facts which may be deemed material by them.

In justice to myself I must add that if this should be so I am not to blame. I wrote twice to Messrs. Hibbert and Platt asking for information. They forwarded my application to Mr. Whitworth, the Secretary of the Employers' Association, from whom I received the following letter:—

"13, CORPORATION STREET, MANCHESTER,
"18*th January*, 1860.

"SIR,—Your letter to Messrs. Hibbert and Platt has been handed to me by Mr. JohnPlatt, the surviving partner.

"As Secretary to the Association of Employers of Operative Engineers, I shall be glad to furnish you with any information which I am able, but I am at a loss to say what information I could send you beyond the published papers which you have already seen.

"I don't think it would be agreeable to the masters generally, that any authorized statement of their course of action should be made.

'I think the general feeling would be that, the matter having been well settled, and no remnant of disturbance having since made its appearance, it would not be wise, nor in the interest of the public good, that the masters should even inferentially do anything to revive in the remotest degree, the feelings which that contest engendered. If, however, I can give you any specific information which will be of use to you, I shall be glad.

"Yours, most obediently,
"HENRY WHITWORTH.

"THOS. HUGHES, ESQ.,
"8, *Old Square, Lincoln's Inn*, W.C."

In answer to which, I forwarded a copy of the present report, asking him for any remarks or evidence as to the facts stated therein. He returned it with the following letter :—

"13, CORPORATION STREET, MANCHESTER,
"*24th January*, 1860.

"SIR,—I have read your paper through, and am obliged by the opportunity you have afforded me.

"I still think it is best that neither the masters nor their then secretary should interfere in reference to the statements made. And whilst complimenting you, as I must, upon the brevity with which you have covered the ground, I think I shall best consult their wishes by refraining from any further remark.

"Thanking you for your courtesy,

"I am,
"Yours, most obediently,
"HENRY WHITWORTH.

"THOS. HUGHES, ESQ.,
"8, *Old Square, Lincoln's Inn, London.*"

I by no means wish to assert or to imply that Mr. Whitworth's view is not the right one, and I wish to thank him for his courteousness to myself personally. I must, however, insist that if the masters' case is not fairly put (which, however, I do not believe,) the blame must rest on their own shoulders.

The dispute between the Master Engineers and the great Society of the Iron Trades, known as the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists, Millwrights, Smiths, and Pattern Makers, which came to the usual crisis in the winter of 1851-2, was the first of a new class of strikes or lock-outs. It was carried on and fought out with the greatest vehemence and stubbornness, and excited the deepest interest through the whole country.

In order to understand the dispute, it will be necessary to go back to the year 1850. In this year a number of the societies of workmen in the iron trades throughout the country (finding, as one of their number expresses it, "That they were in too isolated a state, and therefore not able to command what they were really entitled to") had

united, under the name of "The Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists, Millwrights, Smiths, and Pattern Makers." In 1851 the Society increased rapidly, and on the 31st of December in that year numbered 11,829 members; it had 121 branches in different towns of the United Kingdom; its income for the year amounted to £22,807 8*s.* 8½*d.*; its expenditure to £13,824 19*s.* 11½*d.*; it had in hand an available balance of nearly £22,000.

This Amalgamated Society had from the hour of its birth been pledged to attempt to abolish systematic overtime and piecework in the iron trades. In fact, the desire to get rid of these customs had been one of the chief reasons which had induced the different Societies to consent to the amalgamation.

The attention of the workmen in the iron trades had long been turned to these two customs, both of which, but especially overtime, the great majority of the men undoubtedly believed to be very injurious to their best interests.

In 1836 a compromise had been come to between the masters and men in London, by which it was settled that overtime should be paid for at certain stipulated rates in advance of the regular scale; and this compromise would seem to have remained in force in the London district up to the time of the great strike. But in Lancashire the agitation on these questions became chronic; disagreements, often terminating in strikes, were frequent; the Societies paid for essays on the physical evils of overwork, which were circulated amongst the trades; and by every other means in their power kept up a strong feeling upon these subjects, not only amongst their own members but throughout the trade.

Consequently, at the delegates' meeting at which the amalgamation of the Societies in the iron trade was voted, which was held at Birmingham, in September, 1850, the questions of overtime and piecework were discussed.

At this delegates' meeting (so far as I can judge from the several statements I have seen as to what took place there), the delegates from Lancashire and other districts forced on the Executive Council the necessity of acting, urging "that they were now strong enough to act effectually," and that the whole trade was convinced that the "abolition of the system of overtime and piecework had become absolutely necessary for their future welfare;" while "the Executive Council rather hung back, and for a length of time withstood these demands." However this may have been, it was, at any rate, resolved by the meeting, that the Executive Council should ascertain the feeling of all the members of the Society upon each of these questions, with a view of taking some action with respect to the obnoxious customs.

The inference that it was the country delegates who were urging action and the Council who were holding back, seems to be borne out by the fact, that the Council, when left to themselves, allowed almost a year to pass without taking any step. At length, on the 11th of July, 1851, they issued a Circular to all their branches, which, so far

as it bears upon the lock-out, was as follows :—"In accordance with the instructions of the Birmingham delegate meeting, the Executive Council conceive it to be their duty to ascertain the opinions of the members on the question of piecework and systematic overtime, with a view of adopting some general instructions to their members on those two important subjects."

Annexed was a schedule of questions, amongst which were the following :—

"How many members are there in your district working systematic overtime ?

"How many non-society men are there working systematic overtime ?

"How many members are there in your district working piecework ?

"How many non-society men are there working piecework ?

"Votes of members in your district in favour of abolishing systematic overtime.

_____against_____

"Votes of members in your district in favour of abolishing piecework.

_____against_____

"State the general feeling of the men employed at the trade in your district on the questions of piecework and systematic overtime."

This schedule was to be filled up and returned to the general secretary by the 14th of August.

I do not know whether it has ever been asserted that the opinions of the men were not fairly taken on this Circular. No such assertion was made while the lock-out lasted; it is probable, therefore, that the voting was honest. The result was certainly curious—out of 11,800 members upwards of 9,000 voted, and of these only 16 in favour of piecework and systematic overtime.

The Executive Council seem to have thought the battle already won when the result of this vote became known. They proceeded at once to act, and prepared two official Circulars, one addressed to the men, the other to the masters in the iron trades. On the 24th of November, 1851, these Circulars were published.

The Circular to the men of the trades merely recapitulated the old arguments against systematic overtime and piecework as practised, and then set out the three following resolutions, which had been passed by the Executive Council, and which (as the Circular ended) "they doubt not will be approved of and supported by the whole of the trade":—

"1. That all engineers, machinists, millwrights, smiths, and pattern makers cease to work piece and systematic overtime after the 31st of December, 1851.

"2. That in all cases of break-downs, or accidents where members of the trade are called upon to work overtime, that they be paid double time for all time so worked.

"3. That all time worked after half-past five or six o'clock in the evening, and before six o'clock in the morning, be considered overtime, excepting Saturday, when overtime commences from the termination of the usual day.

"(By the order of the Council,)

"W. ALLAN, *Secretary.*"

It will be remarked that these resolutions are put in the most general form; they are addressed to every member of the trade, and not to the members of the Amalgamated Society only.

In fact, it is quite clear from the tone of the Society at this time that they expected an easy victory. It was evidently the impression of many of the leading men amongst them, that a large number of the masters would agree with them, and be glad to see the two customs abolished, while they made no doubt whatever of overcoming the opposition of the rest. "The amalgamated trades are strong enough," they say, in the Circular last referred to, "to meet any storm of opposition which may arise, and to support those who are faithful to their order, and we are certain of the co-operation of the whole trade, who will rally round us, and with one voice pledge themselves to support us in utterly putting down piecework and overtime."

The Circular to the employers must be set out in full, as it is of great importance in the history of the lock-out.

"*Circular to the Employers.*

"GENTLEMEN,—The Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists, Millwrights, Smiths, and Pattern Makers, wish to address a few observations to you upon the practices of piecework and overtime, which they have come to a resolution to abolish.

"The Executive Council, in taking this course, have not the slightest intention of unwarrantably interfering with, or attempting to dictate to employers. They have only in view the performance of their duty as the guardians of the interests of the members, and the organ through which the voice of the trade expresses itself, and they trust that what they have to say will be interpreted in the amicable spirit which animates them.

"So far, indeed, from the discussion of these questions, if properly considered, having a tendency to create angry feelings, we believe that their satisfactory adjustment is of equal importance to both employers and workmen, and that each party should be anxious to see them equitably settled. We believe, too, that the present time is peculiarly fitted for the discussion of such questions, as is shown by the interest evinced in them by the public at large, and the general desire which exists among all classes to shorten the hours of labour.

"In addressing gentlemen in your position, it is not of course necessary for us to elaborate thoughts, with which you must be to

the full as well acquainted as ourselves; all we need do is to state the simple facts of the case, and leave them to your consideration.

"We would say, then, that overtime is injurious to employers, because it is the dearest possible way of doing the work that is to be done. Not only is the rate of payment for time greater, but a higher price is paid to tired workmen, whose capability of work just when they should be leaving their labour is considerably reduced. Taken as a whole, we should not be far beyond the mark when we say, that work done in overtime costs nearly double that which is performed in the ordinary working hours.

"Beyond, however, the mere fact of men being less able to exert themselves when they are actually working overtime, the system tends to produce permanent incapability, by injuring the health of the workman, and thus making his ordinary labour of less value than it would otherwise be.

"Besides this, overtime is one of the most certain causes of ignorance, by preventing men who leave their beds to work and leave their work to sleep devoting any portion of their time to the cultivation of their minds. Every employer knows that it is better to have intelligent men than ignorant ones, for independent of the former being more tractable and trustworthy, the intelligence they must bring to their work increases their value.

"We have as yet said nothing of the system of piecework, but it must be obvious that most of the reasons applying to overtime are capable of being urged against it, Whatever evils spring from men working longer hours than is consistent with their health or moral wellbeing, spring from piecework to the full as much as from overtime. By it men are incited to work as long as exhausted nature can sustain itself, and in addition it leads them to hurry over their work, and leave it imperfectly finished when defects may be concealed.

"We would hope, however, that irrespective of the considerations springing from these facts, and which merely affect the interests of employers, we may enlist your sympathies on higher grounds. We would appeal to those feelings which dignify and ennoble our common humanity, to induce you to give up something of mere gain, if need be, in order to elevate the condition of your workmen. For that, however, there is no necessity. In this instance, at least, benefit to yourselves and benevolence to your workmen go hand in hand, and we beg that you will serve at once your own cause and that of your workmen, by intimating to us that we need not fear your opposition, but rather may reckon on your support in this effort to deal with the questions of piecework and overtime.

"Entertaining these views, and actuated by these motives, the Executive Council have decided to advise the trade generally to discontinue the practices of systematic overtime and piecework after the 31st of December, 1851, and in those cases where overtime is really necessary, in cases of break-downs or other accidents, all time

so worked over to be charged and paid for at the rate of double time.

"I am, Gentlemen,
"Your obedient Servant,
"WM. ALLAN, *Gen. Sec.*

"LONDON, 25, LITTLE ALIE STREET, WHITECHAPEL,
"*24th November*, 1851."

As the men ought to have foreseen, open war between the Employers and the Amalgamated Society immediately followed the publication of this Circular; but, in order to explain why the struggle took the shape which it did take as soon as the "Employers' Association" came into the field, it will be necessary to glance at some events which had been happening at Oldham during the previous eighteen months.

In 1850, and the early part of 1851, there had been constant disputes between Messrs. Hibbert and Platt, of Oldham, and their workmen, into the particulars of which it is unnecessary to enter further than to remark, that besides the abolition of systematic overtime, the Oldham men had demanded that a certain foreman, whose conduct as to piecework they considered to be very oppressive, should have all authority taken from him; and, that the working of certain machines, which labourers were competent to manage, and were actually managing, should be restored to mechanics.

In February, and again in May, 1851, the Oldham workmen sent to Mr. Newton, one of the Council of the Amalgamated Society, requesting him to come down and try to mediate between them and the firm of Hibbert and Platt. Mr. Newton seems to have gone down in February, merely in his private capacity, and to have disapproved of the demand the men were making for the discharge of unskilled workmen.

Mr. John Platt had proposed as a compromise, that all machines worked by labourers should continue to be worked by labourers, but that all machines to be set up in future should be worked by mechanics.

This proposal was supported by Mr. Newton, but opposed by four-fifths of the men, and Messrs. Hibbert and Platt, sooner than prolong the dispute, came to the arrangement hereinafter referred to.

In May, when summoned again to Oldham, Mr. Newton laid the matter before the Council, probably wishing to carry the authority of the Society with him. The following is the note of the event from the minute book of the Executive Council, dated May 5th, 1851:—

"Mr. Newton informed the Executive Council that he had received a communication from Oldham, requesting him to go down there, as there was a dispute between Messrs. Hibbert, Platt and Co. and their workmen, respecting systematic overtime and the working of machines, the particulars of which he was not enabled to state; but he

would like to know the opinion of the Council on these questions before going.

" 'Resolved,—That the Executive Council is prepared to assist the Oldham members to the extent of their power in abolishing systematic overtime, but cannot consent to assist them in removing the unskilled workmen from the self-acting machines.' "

Mr. Newton went to Oldham, and returned to London in time to attend the meeting of the Executive Council, held on May 13th, 1851. The minute book for that day has the following entry :—

"Mr. Newton stated to the Council that he had been to Oldham, but had not been able to mediate successfully between the workmen and Messrs. Hibbert, Platt and Son. Mr. John Platt had made certain propositions, and he had advised the men to accept them, but they had refused, when it was

"'Resolved,—That in the opinion of this Council the offer of Mr. John Platt ought to be accepted, and the Oldham men will not be justified in refusing it; and that Mr. Newton, of London, and Messrs. Norbury and Hemm, of Manchester, be deputed to the workmen of Messrs. Hibbert and Platt to prevail on them not to leave their situations, but to accept the proposals of Mr. Platt.' "

This deputation accordingly went to Oldham, and not having succeeded in settling the dispute, informed the men that if they struck work they would receive no support from the Society. In July the men did strike, were not supported by the Society, and soon went to work again.

As has been already stated, in February, 1851, an agreement was actually come to, reduced into writing, and signed in duplicate by Messrs. Platt, and by Mr. Newton on behalf of the men, one stipulation in which was, that the machines about which there was the dispute should be restored to skilled mechanics at Christmas, 1851. It is necessary to notice these disputes thus far, to show what ground the "Employer's Association" had for the most telling accusation which they brought against the Amalgamated Society, viz. that that Society demanded the discharge of labourers from self-acting machines.

No such demand was made by the Amalgamated Society; in fact, they had distinctly repudiated it as a Society. On the other hand, Messrs. Hibbert and Platt had been forced by their men to this concession; most of these men actually belonged to the Amalgamated Society, they had summoned a member of the Council to represent them in conferences with their employers, and a deputation had been specially sent by the Society to endeavour to settle the dispute; and no doubt the Oldham men, in their interviews with Messrs. Hibbert and Platt, had used the name of the Society freely.

On the 24th of November, therefore, the day on which the Circulars of the Amalgamated Society were issued, Messrs. Hibbert and Platt were, as the men asserted, under an agreement to restore their self-acting lathes to mechanics at Christmas, 1851; as they themselves asserted, the agreement had been cancelled by the subsequent proceedings of their men, so they were under no such engagement, but their

men were nevertheless going to turn-out on the 31st of December, unless the lathes were given up.

The Circular seems to have excited very little notice at first in the London districts, but in Lancashire a strong feeling of indignation arose at once against the Society. As was natural enough, Messrs. Hibbert and Platt came forward, and by stating their own grievances from their own point of view enlisted the sympathy of the body of employers. A meeting was called on the 9th of December, 1851, at the Clarence Hotel, Manchester, at which most of the engineering firms of the Manchester district were represented, and the following resolutions were passed :—

1st Resolution.—"That this meeting, having heard the statement of Messrs. Hibbert, Platt, and Sons, that their work-people intend to turn out on the 31st of December, 1851, unless all the men now working at planing machines, or tools of a similar character, are discharged, and their places supplied by mechanics belonging to a Trades' Union, the undersigned have taken this statement into consideration, and pledge themselves, should such turn-out take place on this plea, either at the works of Messrs. Hibbert, Platt, and Sons, or at those of any of the undersigned, to close their establishments, and not to re-open them until agreed upon by the vote of a general meeting, and then only with work-people who have no connexion with such Trades' Union.

2nd Resolution.—"That a guarantee fund, arising from contributions of 10*s.* for every person employed by each member of this Association, be formed, to carry out the views, and to defray the expenses of the Society, and deposited in the names of the Committee or Treasurer, in Messrs. B. Heywood and Co.'s Bank, Manchester, as a guarantee for the good faith of each member, and the Committee are hereby empowered, in case any member fails to comply with these resolutions, to forfeit his deposit, or such portion as they may think fit, and their decision shall be final. The Committee are further empowered to return their deposits, or any such portion thereof, as soon as they may consider it expedient."

3rd Resolution.—"That if any member of this Association considers himself aggrieved by any encroachments of his work-people, he is requested to communicate a statement of them to the Secretary, who shall call the Committee together within a week from the receipt of such application, to receive the report, and to decide whether it is a case calling for the interference of the Association."

4th Resolution.—"That each member be requested to communicate to the Secretary, on Tuesday, the 16th December, the number of persons in his employment, and to pay his proportion of the guarantee fund."

At their adjourned meeting, on December 16th, 1851, the Association of Employers prepared and sent to the *Times* the following advertisement, which appeared in that paper on the 20th :—

"MANCHESTER, *Dec.* 17*th*, 1851.

"A body of persons styling themselves the Amalgamated Society

of Engineers, Machinists, Millwrights, Smiths and Pattern Makers, having made demands on several firms in this district which are totally inconsistent with the rights of employers of labour, and would, if acceded to, preclude the exercise of all legitimate authority by the masters in their own workshops; and the same body having further given notice to one of the principal firms, that unless their demands be at once conceded the work-people in their employ will go out on strike on the 31st instant, we, the undersigned engineers, millwrights, and machine-makers, employers in the aggregate of ten thousand hands, have unanimously determined to close our establishments in case any turn-out of such work-people, or of the work-people in the employment of any of us, should take place on the 31st instant, or at any subsequent period, on the ground that such demands have not been complied with.

"We also declare, that we are compelled to adopt this course as a purely defensive step against the interference and dictation of a small but mischievous class of agitators, who are endeavouring to force all well-disposed work-people into open opposition with their employers, and advising steps which can only end in misery and ruin to the really honest and industrious artisan."

This advertisement was signed by thirty-four Lancashire firms. The statements contained in it as to the Amalgamated Society were not strictly accurate, but there was evidently no wish to misrepresent.

In the same paper, however, appeared an anonymous letter, signed "Amicus," drawing attention to the advertisement, and then proceeding as follows:

"As this same Society has favoured the masters throughout the country with a programme of its intentions, I may briefly enumerate the leading features. The Union demands:—

"1. That the system of working extra hours or overtime be abolished, excepting in cases of break-down, and that when such overtime is worked, it shall be paid for at double rates.

"2. That the system of piece or task work be entirely abolished.

"3. That the masters at once and without reserve discharge the class of persons engaged in and long trained to the working of self-acting machines, and employ in their stead mechanics, members of the Union.

"These are their formal demands, but *it is understood* that the Council are prepared to advocate an equalization of the rate of wages; to lend themselves, in fact, to an agitation for a trial of the ingenious doctrines of M. Louis Blanc."

Unfortunately, the *Times* and other papers at once accepted this statement of "Amicus" of the demands of the Society, both formal and *understood*, as true. Anything more untrue could scarcely have been invented. This body of the highest-paid workmen in England were as notoriously opposed to equalization, in the sense here used, as they were to reduction of wages. However, the shaft went home and the wound rankled, and much of the bitter feeling of the men, which long outlived the struggle (and I fear can scarcely be said to be dead even now), "that they had been misrepresented, that they had not had fair

play from the press," must be laid to the account of this reckless anonymous writer.

The Manchester Association of Employers now sent a deputation to London. A meeting was held at the London Coffee-house on December 24th, which was attended by the representatives of most of the firms in the London district. The following is the published Report of their proceedings.

"At a meeting of employers of operative engineers, machinists, &c. held at the London Coffee-house, Ludgate Hill, London, on Wednesday, the 24th December, 1851; present, Messrs.

W. B. Adams, Adams and Co.
William Anderson.
C. E. Amos, Easton and Amos.
Lewis Ash.
John Blyth, J. and A. Blyth.
H. W. Blake, James Watt and Co.
George Bovill, Swaine and Bovill.
Alfred Burton, Burton and Son.
J. J. Brunet, Seaward and Capel.
Alfred Blyth, J. and A. Blyth.
James Cope.
Edward Crawley.
Arthur Collinge, Collinge and Co.
Bryan Donkin, jun. Bryan, Donkin and Co.
Thomas Donkin.
George Easton.
James Easton.
Joshua Field, Maudslay, Sons, and Field.
George Fletcher.
M. D. Grissell, H. and M. Grissell.
Henry Grissell.
P. R. Hodge, Hodge and Batley.
William Heiley.
W. Joyce, Joyce and Co.
William Jackson.
Joel James.
Thomas Maudslay.
J. E. McConnell.
James M. Napier.
J. S. Russell, Robinson and Russell.
John Penn, Penn and Son.
W. H. Pearson.
C. Pontifex, Pontifex, Son and Wood.
George Rennie, G. and Sir J. Rennie.
Richard Ravenhill, Miller, Ravenhill and Salkeld.
Charles Rich.
R. A. Robinson.
William Shears, Shears and Son.
John Seaward, Seaward and Capel.
J. D. A. Samuda.
William Simpson, Simpson and Co.
Daniel Shears, jun.
Joel Spiller.
Hayward Tyler, Tyler and Co.
Stephen T. Taylor.
Joseph Wilkinson.
And other firms.
Also a Deputation from Manchester.

"Joseph Field, Esq., was called to the chair.

"A communication was read from a Committee of Employers of Mechanics of Manchester and neighbourhood, intimating that

"A body of persons styling themselves the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Millwrights, Mechanics, &c., have made the following demands to the employers of this district; accompanied by a threat to one of the principal firms, that unless they are acceded to, their work-people will strike on the 31st inst.

"1. The abolition of overtime, excepting in cases of break-down.

"2. When overtime is absolutely necessary, it is to be paid for at double rates.

"3. The abolition of the system of piecework.

"4. The unconditional discharge of all labourers, or such class of persons at present engaged in working planing machines, or tools of similar character, and the employment in their stead of mechanics, members of the Union.

"Another communication from the Executive Council of the said Amalgamated Society, notifying to the employers of the metropolis

that they 'have come to a resolution to abolish the practices of piece-work and overtime,' after the 31st of December, 1851, was also taken into consideration;

"Whereupon it was unanimously resolved, on the motion of John Blyth, Esq., seconded by Henry Grissell, Esq.:—

"'1. That while this nation, by its representatives in Parliament, has abolished guild privileges, exclusive charters of corporate handicrafts, restrictions on the export of machinery or the free egress from the realm of skilled workmen, and all monopolies, the foregoing requisitions of the Amalgamated Society are an attempt to ignore the right of every British subject to dispose of his labour or capital according to his individual views of his own interest; to deprive the skilled workman of the natural advantages of his superiority; forcibly to compel the industrious and careful mechanic to share the profits of his assiduity and dexterity with the slothful and inexpert; and deliberately to deprive the unskilled labourer of the means of employment.'

"On the motion of John Saward, Esq., seconded by Bryan Donkin, Esq.:—

"'2. That the dependence of the public prosperity upon the steady and uninterrupted pursuit of mechanical industry renders it essential to the successful development of practical engineering enterprise, to the protection of the community from extortionate prices, of the capitalists from becoming the slave of his own hands, and of the steady and able workman from encroachment upon his independent rights of labour, that the threats conveyed in the foregoing manifesto of dictation to employers and tyranny over the employed, should be promptly and peremptorily resisted.'

"On the motion of Richard Ravenhill, Esq., seconded by Joel Spiller, Esq.:—

"'3. That while the division of labour, which is essential to the profitable prosecution of mechanical enterprise, renders the employment of one denomination of workmen dependent upon the co-operation of those engaged in other departments, the threatened strike of the Amalgamated Society, by withdrawing certain classes of artisans from the factory, must have the effect of throwing their fellow-workmen out of employment, by compelling masters to close their establishments until the combinations of skilled labour, interrupted by the secession of the members of the Union, can be supplied.'

"On the motion of Thomas Maudslay, Esq., seconded by George Bovill, Esq.:—

"'4. That while this meeting would, in the spirit of candour and friendly remonstrance, admonish the authors of the manifesto of the pernicious consequences of its enforcement to their own order, the employers here present, and such others as shall adhere to these resolutions, take this earliest opportunity of announcing that, solely as a measure of self-defence, and a protection to their independent workmen, they will, in the event of the hands of any establishment in London, Manchester, or elsewhere, going out on strike, or other-

wise enforcing the demands of the Amalgamated Society on the 31st December, 1851, or at any subsequent period, entirely close their establishments on the 10th day of January, 1852, or within one week after such other period respectively, until the causes which have rendered this step necessary shall have been removed to the satisfaction of the Executive Committee to be hereinafter named.'

"On the motion of John Penn, Esq. seconded by John Scott Russell, Esq.:—

"'5. That the persons present at this meeting do form themselves into, and are hereby constituted, a Society, to be called the Central Association of Employers of Operative Engineers, &c. for the purpose of carrying the foregoing resolutions into effect.'

"On the motion of George Rennie, Esq., seconded by C. E. Amos, Esq.:—

"'6. That John Scott Russell, Thomas Maudslay, Joshua Field, John Penn, George Rennie, Richard Ravenhill, John Seaward, Bryan Donkin, jun., Henry Grissell, C. E. Amos, John Blyth, Joel Spiller, and George Bovill, Esqs., together with the Chairman and Treasurer, with power to add to their number, be elected the Executive Committee of this Association, to adopt all steps necessary to effect its objects and its permanent establishment, for the purpose of watching over the interests and guarding the mutual rights of employers and employed; and that it be instructed to convene an adjourned meeting of this Association, and to report when it shall see fit.'

"The thanks of the meeting were presented to the deputation from Manchester, and also to Charles May, Esq., of the firm of Ransome and May, for their attendance and the information they had afforded.

"By order of the meeting,

"JOSHUA FIELD, *Chairman.*

"On the motion of Richard Ravenhill, Esq., seconded by John Penn, Esq.:—

"'The thanks of the meeting were voted to Mr. Field for his able conduct in the chair.'"

Thus matters stood at the end of the year 1851,—The members of the Amalgamated Society pledged to leave the workshops at the expiration of the regular day's work of ten hours, and not to accept piecework after the 31st of December,—The members of the Masters' Association pledged absolutely to close their establishments on the 10th of January, 1852, as well against non-society men and labourers as against the members of the Amalgamated Society, if workmen in the employment of any of their number should in any manner endeavour to enforce the demands of the Society.

So far as one can judge from published documents, it would seem that the vigour and unanimity of the masters' proceedings took the men by surprise. The most respected employers in the trade, as well as the hard masters, had gone against them. The feeling of these men was well expressed by Mr. Rennie in his speech at the masters' meeting:—

"He was proud," he said, "on this public occasion to acknowledge the virtues and value of the artisans of this country. He for one was not ashamed to acknowledge the debt of gratitude under which they had laid him. He believed all masters of large experience had been indebted for many useful suggestions and valuable ideas to their men, and he deeply regretted the causes which had created estrangement between them. It should not be, however, forgotten that the men had taken the initiative in this act of aggression, and that self-respect as well as prudence required that the masters should defend themselves and peaceable hands from a dictation which was ruinous to both."

The Executive Council therefore addressed a respectful communication to their employers on the subject of the practices of overtime and piecework, and on the 30th of December called a public meeting at the Hall of Commerce, Threadneedle Street, for the purpose of discussing the present state of the iron trades and the position of the Amalgamated Society in relation thereto. The chairman of this meeting was the president of the Amalgamated Society, and the Executive Council then in the most public and formal manner explained their proceedings; declared that their demands were strictly confined to the two mentioned in the Circular of November 24th (viz. overtime and piecework); denied any intention to strike on 1st of January, and offered to refer the whole dispute to independent arbitrators.

This moderation unfortunately came too late. Although all the masters had been invited by circular to attend the meeting, none of them were present, and no notice of the offer of arbitration was taken by the Masters' Association. Accordingly, on the 1st of January, 1851, the men left the shops at the end of the regular day's work, and on the 10th the members of the Masters' Association closed their establishments, and 3,500 members of the Amalgamated Society, about 1,500 skilled workmen, not members of the Society, and some 10,000 labourers, were at once thrown completely out of employment.

Now that the war had fairly broken out, the method of carrying it on adopted by the Masters' Association presented a marked contrast to that of the Amalgamated Society. The different constitutions of the two bodies may probably in a great degree account for the difference.

The masters appointed a paid Secretary, Mr. Sidney Smith, who every now and then addressed letters to the public papers, and managed to embitter the quarrel more and more. They also published a "representation of the case of the Central Association of Employers," a copy of which is appended. But from the day of the closing of the workshops, the Masters' Association, as a body, no longer courted publicity. They had a very arduous contest on their hands, and set to work to fight it out in their own way, silently and sternly.

The only other official document (so far as I know) emanating from the Masters' Association, which came to light during the

struggle, was a circular which was intended for members only. It was published by the Amalgamated Society, who obtained a copy of it. They also published with it an appeal to the trades and the public; copies of these documents will be found in the Appendix.

It will be seen at once from these documents how bitter the strife had become. It is not my business to comment on them.

On one other occasion only did the proceedings of the Masters' Association become public. I wish that I could in fairness to all parties pass over the circumstance, as it proves that some of the masters were using utterly unjustifiable means to secure a victory. On the 18th of February, 1852, Mr. Samuel Fielden, in a letter to the *Times*, speaking of the demand of dismissing labourers from the machines, wrote, "The fact is, this is an invention contrived to injure the cause of the men, particularly in the eyes of other employers. It was only the other day that a deputation of masters urged it to a meeting of railway directors, of whom I was one, as a reason now existing why we should put our railway mechanics on short time, and so disable them from subscribing to the relief of the 60,000 persons whom the masters had reduced to want. Upon being taxed with the falsehood, however, they were obliged to withdraw their statement."

The Amalgamated Society, on the other hand, courted publicity in every way; they held constant public meetings in London, Manchester, and Oldham, and published many resolutions, appeals, and declarations, so that the difficulty in this part of the case is to select the most important documents and facts.

In the first week after the lock-out, the Amalgamated Society issued an appeal to their own trade and the public, on behalf of the non-society men and labourers who had been turned out. This document is full of confidence; a quotation from it will be enough to show its spirit. "The members of the Amalgamated Society," it says, "are to a great extent able to support themselves by their own exertions, their own funds, and the support of their own members, but they feel that their cause is identified with that of the non-society men and the less skilled labourers, and their sympathies forbid them to leave these men to become the victims of an oppression directed mainly against themselves."

The answer to this appeal, which was largely circulated, was a subscription, amounting in the whole to £4,034 7*s.* 3*d.* from private persons. The Society during the strike, paid to the non-society men and labourers £7,767 13*s.* 9*d.*, being upwards of £3,700 more than the subscription. The balance was taken out of the subscriptions which other trades' societies sent to the Executive Council for the Amalgamated Society. These last amounted in the whole to £4,899 15*s.* 6*d.*

The Executive Council certainly gained in public estimation by their conduct towards the labourers, but they soon found the additional burden a great incumbrance to them. Some of the men whom they were trying to help were dissatisfied that more was not done for

them, and grumbled that they were not put on the same footing as the Society men. There was much correspondence on the subject in the papers, which I think need not be brought to light again.

In these first days, besides publishing the appeal, the Council declared publicly that they were about to start workshops of their own, and to expend their funds in hand on this object. They proposed to levy enough on their members still in work to support those thrown out, without touching the funds in hand. This plan, however, was soon abandoned. It was not a time for starting workshops, and the funds were very soon wanted for donations to their own members. Several shops, however, were started by the men, in most cases on borrowed funds. Those in the London districts, so far as I know, have all failed, some of them after having succeeded well for years. I am informed that in the Lancashire district several have succeeded.

Then came several unsuccessful attempts to get the dispute referred to arbitration (in one of which I was myself concerned). The particulars do not seem to be worth stating. The offer came from the Executive Council, who, no doubt, were surprised by the magnitude of the struggle, and were already anxious as to the result, and ready to accept any reasonable extrication. The masters consistently refused all compromise.

On the 24th, the masters' resolutions containing "the declaration" were published, and the indignation which they excited carried the men nearly through February. In fact, there were no signs of flagging till some weeks after the allowance of the men out of work had been reduced from 15*s*. to 10*s*.

Notwithstanding the repeated assertions of the Executive Council as to the demands which the Society had made on their employers, so many mis-statements were still circulated on the subject, that the Council, on the 2nd of February, 1852, published a formal declaration, with the view, if possible, of setting themselves right on this point. This declaration was put forth by the Council, "publicly to declare what they have done, and publicly to deny what they have not done." It is appended to this paper, and should be read with the masters' statement of their case (also appended) by all who wish to understand this particular contest.

The masters had all opened their workshops again early in February, though few of them I believe did much business. They admitted all men who would sign the declaration, and great exertions were made through February and March, by the one side to get men to work, by the other to hinder them from going to work. When I say to hinder, I do not mean that forcible methods were employed, as had been too often the case in former strikes and locks-out. The Executive Council from the first set their faces so decidedly against all such practices, that notwithstanding the exasperation produced by the "declaration," I do not suppose there ever was a struggle of the sort so wholly free from anything like intimidation. At this distance of time I may possibly have forgotten the facts, but I do not

remember, nor is there any allusion in the papers before me to a single proved case of improper interference on the part of the men turned out with those who choose to go to work. Whatever one may think of the spirit in which the struggle was commenced by the Amalgamated Society, or of their demands, they are fully entitled to praise on this point.

In the middle of March it was becoming evident that the Amalgamated Society could not hold out much longer. The rumours which had been so rife for the first two months, that the masters were divided, that they were about to yield, &c., had ceased altogether. It was only a dogged resolution to stand out till the last against "the declaration" which kept the men from going in. By the end of March the Executive Council virtually gave up the contest, and the members were allowed to go back to work on the best terms they could get.

The 30th of March, 1852, must have been a bitter day for the men of the Manchester district, who had been foremost in the whole business. On that day a deputation from them waited upon the Association of Employers, and sent up the following letter:—

"*To the Association of Employers, &c.*

"GENTLEMEN,—The Manchester District Committee agree to withdraw the Circular issued by our Executive Council, dated November 24th, 1851, and the Circular emanating from a meeting held in Carpenters' Hall, October 2nd, 1851, on condition that you withdraw the declaration.

"If the above proposition meet your approbation, and the ground is clear, we suggest the following propositions for your consideration. First, to work piecework on a mutual principle between employer and employed. Secondly, to work overtime when necessary, and to be paid for so working at the rate of time and quarter for the first two hours, time and a half for the next two hours, and double time for every hour worked afterwards.

"The deputation is waiting to appear before the Association, or to answer any question that may be put to them on behalf of the workmen.

"Gentlemen, yours respectfully,

"WILLIAM HEMM, *Sec.*"

The Employers' Association would not admit the deputation, but sent down the following answer :—

"ASSOCIATION OF EMPLOYERS OF ENGINEERS, &c.
"8, CROSS STREET, MANCHESTER,
"*March 30th*, 1852.

"SIR,—We are instructed by the Executive Committee of the Employers' Association to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day, and, in reply, to say that the Committee cannot enter into any compromise whatever.

"They are strongly opposed to all combinations, whether of masters or workmen, and they must remind you that they were forced into the present one by the aggressive acts of your and other societies;

and until all the objectionable rules, demands and bye-laws of such societies are unconditionally rescinded and withdrawn, and the unquestionable right of every employer to make what arrangements and engage what workmen he pleases is fully recognised, the Committee do not feel justified in recommending the Association to rescind any resolution which they have thought necessary to adopt.

"We are, Sir, your very obedient Servants,

"RICHARDSON & WHITWORTH, *Secs.*

"MR. W. HEMM, *Secretary*,
"*Manchester Branch of the Amalgamated Society.*"

After this no further propositions were (I believe) made to the Employers' Association in either of the districts, and by the end of April almost all the men had got back to work. The saddest part of the whole story to my mind remains. It is very difficult to ascertain the facts, but I fear that almost all the masters insisted on "the declaration," and it was signed by large numbers of the men who did not leave, and never meant to leave, the Amalgamated Society. It is true that the bread of their families depended on their getting back to work, and one may suggest many other excuses. But they are excuses for that which is inexcusable.

The cost of the lock-out to the Amalgamated Society has been calculated at different sums. The generally received sum is £42,000; but I find that according to the financial statements published by order of the delegates' meeting at Glasgow, the exact cost in cash was £35,459 0*s.* 9*d.* But it must be remembered that the usual expenses of the Society were running, such as sick, benefit, superannuation and funeral allowances, &c. The total expenditure for the half-year ending June 30th, 1852, was £50,885 12*s.* 2*d.* To these sums should be added the amount of wages lost by the men during their three months of idleness, before we can fairly estimate the cost to the work-people only.

A considerable number of men emigrated sooner than sign "the declaration." Many of these had to borrow the money for their passage out. One gentleman advanced considerably more than £1,000 to a number of these men who were going to Australia, on their simple bond. The whole sum and interest has been repaid.

The consequence of this emigration has been, that the Society has now branches at Sydney, in Australia; at Montreal, in Canada; and at Hamilton, Toronto, and Brantford, in Upper Canada.

The effect of the strike upon the Amalgamated Society was, perhaps, not so great as one would have anticipated. It is true that, in June, 1852, the Society's balance had fallen from £21,705 4*s.* 11½*d.* to £1,721 0*s.* 11*d.*, but the funds rapidly recovered themselves towards the end of the year, and the balance of the Society had risen on new year's eve to about £5,500. A more serious danger seemed to be threatening about this time. The number of members was falling off rapidly. In June, 1852, they were 11,617, on the 31st of December only 9,737. Nevertheless the Society was never seriously

shaken, so far as one can judge from published records, for in this very year of 1852, eight new branches were established, and notwithstanding the trial which it had so lately passed through, and the consequent state of exhaustion of most of the members, the fines and payments were never relaxed.

It is an instructive piece of reading, for any one who believes that trades' societies can be put down at this time of day, the Report of the Amalgamated Society for 1852, with its ten closely printed pages of excluded members, the cause of exclusion, in nine cases out of ten at least, being simply for arrears. The present position of the Society may be estimated from the fact, that in 1858 it distributed £47,368 in benefits to its members, and had yet a balance of nearly £30,000 at the year's end. The number of members is now upwards of 17,000.

I have added a table, which will show the effect of the strike on the finances and numbers of the Amalgamated Society, and its progress since 1852. The fact that after such a struggle this Society has continued to exist and flourish wholly unrecognised by the law of the country, and yet carrying on minute financial operations all over the United Kingdom and in the colonies, extending year by year its influence and operations, and claiming and obtaining obedience to its rules from a body of 17,000 of the most skilful artisans in the world, ought to make all reasonable people pause before they accept the current belief as to trades' societies. For, be it remembered, this Amalgamated Society is only one of many.

For my own part, after years of watching these Societies, and disliking many of their doctrines and doings as much as any man, I am most firmly convinced that we are only mischievously shutting our eyes to the truth when we go on declaring that they have not the confidence of the body of the mechanics and artisans of the nation—that they are got up and led, not by good workmen, but by designing and idle men for their own purposes—that they exercise an unpopular tyranny and surveillance over the trades, &c. &c. The contrary of all this is the truth, and will be found to be so sooner or later; though it is quite possible that here and there a mischievous man may be in office, or a tyrannical custom or rule in force. I believe that there is quite time (if we will only recognise the facts of the case, and treat the Unions both in legislation and in the ordinary dealings of life as they have a right to be treated) to render their influence and action wholly beneficial to the great common interests of the nation. I believe that the present disastrous state of feeling between employers and employed can never be improved, will only become worse, while the Unions remain unrecognised by the law, and misrepresented, hated, and feared by all classes of society except that great one of which they are exclusively composed, and whose ideas and wishes they do, on the whole, faithfully represent and carry out.

APPENDIX I.

	Number of Members.	Income of the Year.	Expenditure of the Year.	Balance at Christmas.	Number of Branches.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1851 ..	11,829	22,807 8 8½	13,824 19 11½	21,705 4 11½	121
Half-year ending June 30th, 1852	11,617	44,415 5 1	63,553 15 8	1,721 0 11	122
Half-year ending Dec. 31st, 1852	9,737	12,953 0 2	9,489 0 4½	5,382 1 3½ or 5,504 11 7½	129
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1853 ..	10,757	26,639 9 5	14,331 4 5½	17,812 16 7	141
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1854 ..	11,617	32,225 2 4	20,834 19 10	29,202 19 1	156
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1855 ..	12,553	35,706 19 8½	29,214 18 10½	35,695 1 11	166
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1856 ..	13,405	38,899 9 9½	31,386 13 5	43,207 18 3½	173
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1857 ..	14,299	42,822 10 3	38,103 14 6	47,947 4 10½	179
Year ending Dec. 31st, 1858 ..	14,745	44,733 5 11½	62,226 18 8½	28,732 8 3½	186

NOTE.—Since Christmas, 1858, the numbers have rapidly increased, and there are now upwards of 17,000 Members of the Society.

APPENDIX II.

Declaration of the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society.

"In consequence of the demands and intentions which have been attributed to the Amalgamated Society, the Executive Council have thought it necessary publicly to declare what they have done, and publicly to deny what they have not done.

"They have not demanded the discharge of unskilled workmen. They have not endeavoured to throw the skilled operative, not belonging to the Society, out of work, nor have they ever recommended others to do so. Neither have they countenanced a system of intimidation having that object. They do not seek to fix or to equalize wages, but hold the doctrine that wages should be settled by individual agreement. They do not endeavour to prevent the introduction of machinery; but by their skill and labour perfect and multiply it.

"They do not attempt to bring about any of those things; but in their Circular to the employers carefully limit themselves to the questions of overtime and piecework. To these they still rigidly confine themselves, and they conceive that the reasons for asking for the cessation of these practices are sufficient to justify them.

"They look upon overtime as both a privilege and an evil. A privilege, because it holds out to men an opportunity of making more money; an evil, because that money is made at the expense of their own health, strength, mental powers, and happiness, as well as the welfare and independence of others. It is not the first time in the world's history that a privilege has been an evil at once to those whom it seemed to benefit, and those whom it evidently injured, but in whatever light 'piecework and overtime' are regarded, the members of the Amalgamated Society, by a majority of more than nine thousand to a minority of less than twenty, have expressed their wish to give them up, and abolish the systems.

"The reasons which prompted them to this may be shortly stated:—First, as to 'systematic overtime,' a term meant to imply time regularly worked (over and above the ten hours) from week to week, and from month to month, and in many instances the whole year round, without intermission. They know it deprives them of rational enjoyment, prevents them from using opportunities for culture, and weakens their physical powers. They feel that their wellbeing is not a thing to be bought and sold for so many shillings a week. They contend there is no necessity for it, because hundreds are begging to be allowed to take their share of the work. Belonging to a society as they do, their overtime earnings, or a portion of them, go to support those of their fellows whom that over-

time keeps idle; and, above all, they recognise the gross injustice of, by any voluntary act of theirs, degrading men as competent and industrious as themselves, into dependents on the funds of the Association.

"With regard to piecework, they wish it to be fully understood that their objections are to the system as it is, not as it ought to be. The Executive Council will continue to oppose piecework as it is, for the following reasons:—The price is arbitrarily fixed by the masters or middle-men, and often piece-masters or sweaters are introduced, who take a portion of that price themselves; thus making the workman pay out of his wages for the cost of direction and management. If the workman should, by dint of his own expertness and working very hard, earn much more than an ordinary week's wages, the price which was arbitrarily fixed is as arbitrarily reduced for the profit of the manufacturer, who refuses to pay the price originally agreed upon. This is done with the strongest and most expert workmen, and the moderate in strength and ability are compelled to work worse than slaves, for a comparatively miserable pittance.

"Besides these evils arising out of the general working of the system, there are special wrongs connected with it, and of which many instances can be produced. After a man has taken a job at a certain rate, if he should make at it double an ordinary week's wages, the employers will not pay him. They tell him they do not allow him to make so much money as that. Most of the manufacturers will not permit more than 'time and quarter,' none that we know of will allow more than 'time and half' to be paid at piecework. It may be necessary to explain these terms to the public. They mean that if a man's ordinary wages at day work be 30*s.* a week, the employer, no matter how hard the man works, nor how much he does, will generally not pay him more than £1 17*s.* 6*d.*, never more than £2 5*s.* 0*d.*; and if the artisan, by superior skill, by his own introduction of a new mode of working, or by increased toil, does more than comes to that, he is compelled to forego the fair reward of his ingenuity and industry. These evils are so general, and there not being any means of removing them without abolishing the system, the members of the Amalgamated Society have come to the conclusion that they will no longer be oppressed by them.

"It is submitted that such a system as this ought not to be tolerated, and that all peaceable and legal means of resistance to it are justifiable. It should be added too, that in what they have done the Executive Council act only upon the expressed wish of their members, and they profess to exercise no control over those who do not belong to their Society.

"The Executive Council feel that their justification might well stop here, but there are questions not entering into the general dispute which are pressed upon them, and to which they desire to give a frank answer. They are asked whether they acknowledge the right of any employer to engage who he likes, and the right of every industrious man to work at any honest calling that is open to him. They answer that they do, but at the same time they also assert their right to refuse to instruct any man in their trade, so that he might take their places at reduced wages, or force them to accept a lower price. They are asked also how they dare limit the right of the employer to take any number of apprentices. They answer that if the employer will teach *his* apprentices, he may take as many as he pleases, but they are called upon to do that, and they claim to say how many or how few they will teach. Their skill is as much theirs as the employer's establishment, his business, and his capital are his, and they claim a right to dispose of it or communicate it according to rules which appear to them to be beneficial. The Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society hope that this explanation of their views and acts is sufficient to demonstrate that while they assert the rights of their members, and endeavour to secure their welfare, they do not attack the just claims or peril the prosperity of any other class.

"(By order of the Executive Council,)

"Jos. Musto, *President.*

"Wm. Allan, *Secretary.*

"London, 25, Little Alie Street, Whitechapel,

"*February* 2, 1852."

APPENDIX III.

Representation of the Case of the Executive Committee of the Central Association of Employers of Operative Engineers, &c.

"On Saturday the establishments of all our members were closed. The conditions of an honourable pledge to each other have been faithfully fulfilled; and masters and men, free of their mutual engagements, will be once more called upon to settle the conditions of any new contract into which they may find it for their reciprocal interest to enter.

"The step which we have adopted, with regret, made all the more acute by a sense of the hardship it will inflict upon the innocent and the deserving, entails upon us all a certain heavy loss. We are reluctantly reconciled to it by the conviction, maturely weighed, and painfully arrived at, that our well-disposed workmen had better patiently bear a present burden, than linger under a permanent oppression; and that we ourselves can only arrest the encroachments of irresponsible dictation, and the gradual but certain progress of that spirit of exaction to which we have already, from motives of conciliation, too easily yielded (to the injury of our trade, and the certain ruin of the operatives, at whose instance unwise concessions have been too readily made), by taking our stand at once, and coming to a reckoning now and here.

"ALL WE WANT IS TO BE LET ALONE. WITH LESS THAN THAT WE SHALL NOT BE SATISFIED. UNTIL WE ACCOMPLISH THAT, WE SHALL NOT RE-OPEN OUR ESTABLISHMENTS. With every respect for noble and distinguished referees, whose arbitration has been tendered to us, and with no reason to doubt that their award would be honest, intelligent, and satisfactory, we must take leave to say that *we* alone are the competent judges of our own business; that we are respectively the masters of our own establishments; and that it is our firm determination to remain so. To this principle we recognise no exceptions. We should as little dream of permitting *each other*, as a common neutral stranger, to lay down the rules by which we are respectively to manage our individual affairs. Ours is the responsibility of the details; ours the risk of loss; ours the capital, its perils, and its engagements. We claim, and are resolved to assert, the right of every British subject, to do what we like with our own, and to vindicate the title of our workmen to the same constitutional privilege. Artisans and their employers are respectively INDIVIDUALS—each legally capable of consent—each severally entitled to contract. Our agreements for their service are made with them, in their separate, not in their aggregate capacity. They have labour and skill to sell; we have capital to employ it, and to pay it. Who, then, or what, should stand between these two single parties to a lawful bargain, and dictate to the buyer what he should give, or control the seller in the conditions of his service? In the most literal sense we are the *customers* of the working classes; and the interference of self-constituted arbiters with the internal economy of our establishments is not less preposterous than would be a command from our baker as to the number or the price of loaves we should consume; or a mandate from our butcher as to when we should dine, and what should be the meat. We altogether ignore the proposition that we should submit to arbitration the question, whether our own property is ours, and whether we are entitled to be the masters of our own actions.

"Our business renders us more obnoxious to strikes than any other, and renders precautions against them more imperative. The heavy expense of our machinery and tools, and the peculiar character of the work we produce, render overtime, piecework and irregularity of employment an unavoidable and certain incident of our calling. We cannot, like the spinner, the weaver, or the cloth-worker, manufacture on speculation, and produce without order, certain that ultimately the article will be required, and must always be in demand. The same yarn will weave to any pattern, the same cloth will fit any coat;—but we can only produce to order, and we must produce our commodity *when* it is ordered. Our customers require all their purchases for a special purpose, and at a particular time. Perhaps they are useless to them, unless supplied when stipulated —certainly they will cease to employ us, if we fail to finish to our time. Belgium

and Germany are not far off. Piedmont and Switzerland are quite within competitive distance. The United States begin to manufacture for themselves, and even to meet us in neutral markets. France, but recently our largest customer, is now our most formidable rival, and, in spite of her disadvantages in reference to the raw material, almost entirely supplies her own demand. If we are to enjoy an equality of advantages with our competitors in the common market of the world, we must consent to bind ourselves to complete our contracts on a day early, and certain. Short-sighted unionists, aware that we work against time, some of us under actual penalties, all of us under peril of the loss of trade if we fail in punctuality, induce the men, when the master is in his greatest difficulty, to take advantage of his necessities to wring from him humiliating and unjust concessions, which leave him without profit, or threaten him with loss. Afraid to subject himself to the repetition of practices which present to him only the alternative betwixt heavy fines for failure of contracts, or loss of business-character, and exorbitant remuneration for inferior skill, the master declines otherwise profitable orders, draws his operations narrower, and diminishes the demand for labour; and this dread, spreading generally through the trade, and too amply justified by offensive interference, forced upon every master, induces a universal disposition to decline the most valuable custom, and thereby seriously to depress the business, and circumscribe the employment of the country.

"It will readily occur to all who have the slightest acquaintance with commerce, that production carried on almost entirely to order, and limited as to time in its completion, cannot be conducted without *overtime*, in a great measure as systematic as the punctuality of the time orders received—that as masters are taxed from twenty-five to fifty per cent. more for the extra hours, when the service is least valuable, nothing but necessity would induce them to adopt the practice—that from the very nature of mechanical operations, which are almost as dependent on each other, and as successive in their processes as the inanimate machinery they fabricate, the non-completion of one article may keep many persons idle who are waiting to commence some department of machinery to which the former is indispensable; and that as the machinery and tools used in engineering involve vast outlay of capital—the only option left to the employer is to work one set of tools beyond the usual hours of labour, or to erect another set at an exorbitant expense, which, even if it would serve the same purpose, which it could not, must come out of the price of the work it executes; in which case demand is discouraged, and customers are driven to foreign markets, and by their withdrawal the demand for employment is destroyed.*

"It is under these circumstances that the employers in Lancashire and in London have, by *pre-concert, simultaneously* received notice from the ostensible representatives of 15,000 of our artisans, that 'they have come to a resolution to abolish the practices of overtime and piecework;' and in 'those cases where overtime is really necessary, in cases of break-downs or other accidents, all time so worked over, to be charged and paid at the rate of double time.' The true intent and meaning of these conditions is this,—that where a master sustains the heavy loss of breaking a highly expensive instrument, he shall, in addition to his misfortune, be fined by our artisans double wages to repair it, although the earnings of perhaps a thousand of their fellow-mechanics may depend on the immedi-

* Many illustrations will occur to the professional reader, of the impossibility of procuring a substitute for, or dispensing with the use of overtime in a trade which is so peculiarly dependent for orders on seasons and punctuality. Railway engines must be supplied to time, to prevent the confusion of the whole public arrangements; and as the nature of the work will not admit of the access to it of more than a certain number of hands, it is impracticable to avoid irregularity or protraction of the hours of labour. Proprietors of steamers on the Rhine, the Thames, or the Clyde must have new steamboats ready *before the travelling season*, else the profits they would earn would be lost, and the order, therefore, would not be given, except under obligation to complete the vessels in proper time, which may only be possible by working over-hours. Whole fleets of steamers may be damaged by winter storms, and to despatch mails with punctuality, the repairs must be pressed forward day and night.

ate resumption of its working. For the protection of our customers, there is no sacrifice which we will not cheerfully bear, rather than submit to this extortion.

"Many of ourselves have traced their rise from the condition of the employed to that of the employers to the opportunities afforded by piecework, which enabled them to become small contractors, and thereby to avail themselves of the rewards of their directing skill. As it is the fairest and least fallible test of the value of labour, and best enables the master to make his estimates with security, so it is the line which measures off the expert and industrious workman from the lazy and unskilful: and, above all, it is the lever by which patient merit and superior intelligence raises itself above the surrounding level, and enables society to reward and to profit by mechanical genius, and energy, as well as respectability of character. All classes, in nearly every avocation, have occasionally to work overtime—the Prime Minister perhaps the most—the successful physician or the greatest lawyer the most slavishly. But men of any merit voluntarily set the task to themselves—those of the mechanic class earnestly desire it; and so far is either that or piecework from being regarded as an oppression, our experience as masters is, that in the eyes of mechanics, as a body, it is viewed as a positive objection to an establishment that it does *not* afford opportunity for working overtime. The real objection to piecework, we fear, is, that it protects the masters against those who are indisposed to give a fair day's work for a fair day's wages.

"Another requisition has been served upon the Lancashire employers, which has not upon the *present occasion* been extended to those of London. A demand has been made for the dismissal of labourers from self-acting machines, and the substitution of mechanics, at higher wages, to perform operations in which no skill *can* be exerted; although, to suit the purposes of those who issued this imperious edict, it is now disclaimed. The signature of 'W. Newton' to the notice on Messrs. Hibbert and Platt, and of 'W. Hemm' to that left with Messrs. Parr, Curtis, and Madely, which can be supported by many other cases, render the renegation a mere wanton act of purposeless, because abortive, misrepresentation.

"These extraordinary interpositions of self-constituted dictators of the rules which are to guide the management of our establishments, have indeed been perpetrated on the plea of progressive philanthropy, and a desire for moral improvement; but a reference to the 'Rules and Regulations of the Amalgamated Society,' by whose interference they have been preferred, strips this pretext of every claim to any other character than that of very clumsy, because ill-concealed, hypocrisy. Prefaced by the very becoming, but scarcely very apposite sentiment, that 'All men are brethren,' and followed up by the very much more appropriate aphorism for a conspiracy and combination against individual rights and liberty of action, 'United we stand, divided we fall,' it observes, 'If we should be constrained to make RESTRICTIONS against encroachments on our *interests by those who have not earned a right by a probationary servitude*, we do so, knowing that such encroachments are productive of such awful consequences to a trade, if left unchecked. It is our duty, then, to *exercise the same* CONTROL over that in which we have a VESTED INTEREST, as the physician who holds his diploma, or the author who is protected by his copyright.' After proposing a 'well-regulated *organization to prevent surplus labour in* OUR TRADE'—a hint that the great influence of the associates 'must be used for our *members*,'—that those only who support *them* will *be* supported, and that all independent workmen who do not belong to the Society will find themselves in an 'isolated position' (which, in the Annual Report of 20th December, is by implication made to mean virtually that every vacancy in any establishment shall be filled up only by Society men), the following extract lays bare the whole secret springs and governing principles of the present movement.

"RULE XXIII.

"1st. Systematic overtime and its discontinuance. 2nd. Piecework, &c.

"Sect. 1. That, in order to *secure to our* MEMBERS *a general prospect of employment*, we repudiate 'systematic overtime' as being the cause of much evil, through giving a number the PRIVILEGE of working more than a legitimate week's time, whilst doing so deprives other members of situations, producing much domestic misery, and *causing a great expenditure of the Society's funds*. We therefore

authorize the Executive Council to take steps for its immediate discontinuance by . . . *issuing a general order for all* districts simultaneously to adopt this resolution. ANY MEMBER REFUSING TO COMPLY WITH THIS RESOLUTION RENDERS HIMSELF LIABLE TO BE EXCLUDED."

On the *platform* it was convenient to represent the abolition of overtime as an emancipation from oppression. In the *rule*, it is honestly described as a "privilege." In the addresses to the *employers*, it is called for as an eager aspiration of mechanics, anxious for their moral progress, and mental improvement. In the *code of the Society*, it is demanded as a means to equalise the market of employment, or in other words, the wages of labour, and to *save the Society's funds;* a motive we had understood to be too sordidly commercial, and partaking too deeply of the "mere Manchester school of cold blooded political economy," to weigh with the Executive Council.

The second section of this chapter of the regulations very plainly asserts every principle or object which the Council find it now convenient to disclaim.

"Sect. 2. That the same steps" (that is a peremptory *order*, to be obeyed *under pain of expulsion*, and forfeiture of deposits) "be taken to abolish piecework, to destroy *the practice of working more than one lathe or machine*, to prevent *a greater number of apprentices* OR ADMISSIONS *into our trade than are likely to find employment therein—apprentices to be in proportion of one to four journeymen*—and to assimilate the number of working hours in each district, so that . . . if circumstances require *a further reduction of the hours of labour*, such may be accomplished;" and it has only to be added, that by rule 36th, "Any member *divulging anything relating to the Society's business*, except to a member or members, shall be fined *2s 6d.*" in order to complete the exposition of the true nature of this conspiracy of many enthusiasts and some impostors to betray the unsuspecting artisan into the conversion of a benefit club into a secret society, its objects into those of realizing a "New Moral World," the "organization of labour," and an experiment of the dreams of Louis Blanc, embracing the visions of Owen, without their catholicity, and the extravagance of Fourrier, *leavened with a selfishness of which his benevolence would have been ashamed.*

"All this, however, is but the final development of action upon a settled system, by the selfsame parties, which took its rise about the period of the outburst of the French Revolution of 1848, in a Central Committee of Operative Engineers, which was merged in and amalgamated with the present Society.

"In a letter from W. Davenport, then secretary of that body, dated the 30th of November, 1848, to an eminent firm, he very coolly thus interposes his voluntary authority:—'It having been represented TO US, by some of your workmen, that certain persons are employed as engine-fitters in your manufactory at ——, *who have not served a legal apprenticeship to the trade;* this practice, most of your workmen employed there think, *would be abolished* if you were made acquainted with it, SO ALSO DOES THE COMMITTEE; (!) as we feel sure that you will *see the injustice of employing or training up men to a business, when others who have spent a portion of their lives serving an apprenticeship, with the hope of getting a livelihood thereby, are now in want of employ,*' and for whom, the only legitimate conclusion is, the writer requires room to be made at the *expense of the dismissal of others.*

"On the 1st of December, 1848, the same Committee address their employers on 'systematic overtime,' as 'enabling *a few to monopolize more than a fair proportion of labour*, whilst others are perambulating the streets, wanting such labour . . . and the more equally labour can be distributed amongst labourers, is their condition made more consonant with comfort and happiness." So far from the practice being regarded as oppressive or demoralizing, the address takes credit for the greatest '*disinterestedness* of a many, expressed in this their desire to *sacrifice some portion of their present earnings* in favour of workmen more unfortunate than themselves.'

"On the 23d of August, 1849, the hands of another firm, headed by the Chairman of the Executive Council, demanded a rise of wages, 'as the *generality of the trade* in this district are seriously dissatisfied at our continuing under such disadvantages;' and on the 29th, Mr. W. Newton, and a deputation from the Central Committee, asked an interview on the subject. On the same day, W.

Newton, Secretary, posts printed notices throughout the country, 'advising workmen not to accept situations, if offered, unless 33*s.* per week be *guaranteed at least*, in consequence of a dispute respecting wages at Messrs.——,' and on the 1st of September, W. Newton, Secretary, calls a public meeting at his own tavern, the Phœnix, to 'advise workmen from the country not to be allured by the offer of employment.'

"On September 29th, he reports that the Committee advised ——'s 'workmen *to ask for more money*,'—'all did so, and left;' 'but we are sorry to complain of four or five individuals who refused to follow that simple advice. . . . Of course, no further confidence could be placed in them, and from that time *they were never more treated with, but left to the dictates of their own evil wishes*. . . . The following week our advice extended to the *whole of the workmen who were receiving* 30*s. and under, that they should ask for more money*'—without any inquiry whatever, whether they were worth more or not.

"'In order to *ascertain what wages* were paid them, we *requested them to meet us* on the Saturday evening, and *present their tickets for* OUR INSPECTION. . . . We found about an equal number at 32*s.* and 33*s.*, and one at 30*s.*; our advice then was still in accordance with our first decision, that those under 33*s.* should ask for more, the first thing on Monday morning, and if they did not get it to leave. . . . Our trade will know how to draw a distinction betwixt those who honourably stand up for its interest and support, *and those who receive a rise of* wages as a bribe *for their opposition to its wishes*.'

"What the penalty is of 'opposition to the wishes' of the heptarchy reigning at Little Alie Street, Whitechapel, may be learnt from the converse of obsequious submission. Their report of 20th December ordains that, 'In all districts there is a duty incumbent on all MEMBERS in employment, to *use their influence in their respective workshops in favour of* MEMBERS out of employment. . . . If our recommendations are adhered to, and our members are active and energetic in all their TRADE *proceedings*, we shall soon still further improve our condition, and make our Society the *real ruler of the destinies of our trade*.' Couple this 'advice' with the Rules, which fine every member who, within *twelve hours after knowing of or making a vacancy, fails to give notice of it to the* Secretary (see 'List of Fines'), *for seeking work before applying to the Secretary*, or for not calling every day on the Secretary, and it will be obvious that if the foremen, who generally have the engagement of hands, belong (as they not seldom do) to the Society, no man who 'opposes the wishes' of the Executive Council has the slightest chance of any engagement. That this great 'organization of labour' and system of dictation and espionage may be reduced to the most perfect method, the 'members' in every factory have sent to them printed forms of returns, to be made periodically to the Secretary, entitled 'From the Central Committee of Engineers, &c., of London and its vicinity. Schedule for collecting statistical information. M. Shop,' with columns headed 'Name,' 'Profession,—whether fitter, turner, erector, pattern-maker, or smith.' 'What society do you belong to?' 'Whether you ever worked at this shop before, and what was the last date?' 'What wages you now receive?' 'What wages you received when here before?' Such a form, regularly filled up, with answers to the queries given in the proper columns, is in our possession. It discloses the private particulars of a firm's business, with the history and position of its artisans, and these, from every shop, *inspected by the Executive Council*, are all that are required to enable them to set their mark upon every man, and every master; to pick out those who are paid less than others (because they are *worth less*), cajole them to join the Society, force them to withdraw from their employment, and foster and foment discontent between employers and employed, wherever a weak point or a stupid or inferior workman affords the hope of successful mutiny. In the Report of 1st October, 1849 much self-credit is taken for having tampered with the hands of Swayne and Bovill, for administering the customary deputation on them, withdrawing their hands, and nursing the discontent of those who apparently did not discover that they were unhappy, until told by the committee. Messrs. Cope and Sherwin, and Mr Mitcham, of Greenwich, are patronisingly praised for having kissed the rod of these alguazils of industry. The 'South Western Railway shop,' Mr. Horn, of Whitechapel, Mr.

Wood, of the Strand, the 'Stratford Railway shop,' are named as the victims of their domiciliary visits. Messrs. England, of Old Kent Road, and Mr. Fletcher, of Southwark, are also mentioned as falling before the might and majesty of the deputation. Of '——'s men who heeded not the advice of the committee,' it is very significantly asked 'whether, even taken as a matter of advantage, it is well to *offend a whole trade* for the purpose of subserving the interest of such an employer? . . . . Punishment must and will follow, by the *odium which falls upon the character of men so acting*. . . . . Their character and conduct, of course, is before the trade . . . . the opinions have been most severe on these men.' Thus pointed at in the Report of December, 1849, marked out for the 'odium' of the trade, which artisans know, by bitter experience, means unceasing efforts to throw and keep the offenders out of employment, and to compromise even their personal safety, it can surprise no one that the Report of February, 1850, announces, with triumph, that 'the Manchester Society, to which they belonged, have recently called an aggregate meeting of their members in the district, and passed a resolution, *excluding them from that Society, and all participation in its benefits.*'

"In dismissing the narrative part of these Reports, it has only to be added, that in that of 24th November, 1851, the Executive Council came to the Resolutions as to overtime, piecework, and double wages, announced in their address to their employers; and also declared—'3rd, That all time worked after half-past five or six o'clock in the evening, and before six o'clock in the morning, be considered overtime, excepting Saturday, when overtime commences from the termination of the usual day.' By this edict, overtime is made to signify not a surplus over a day's work, but the period after a certain hour of the evening; so that if a mechanic came to his work at one o'clock in the day, he would be entitled to get double wages for making up at night the time that he had lost by his own unpunctuality in the morning. To borrow the striking observations of Messrs. Charles Walker and Sons, 'We are sorry that a Society, whose views of *ameliorating the condition of their own body*, as set forth in their address, must be admired, should also attempt to take advantage of the employer when he cannot help himself, in "break-downs" and accidents, by charging "double time" for all his labour in *assisting him out of his difficulty—when all is loss to make it greater, by not agreeing to set the mangled limb unless they are paid double.* We hope, if there be nothing expunged from their "address," at least they will have the good taste and good feeling to remove this clause.'

"The financial appendices to these Reports afford revelations even more significant than the text. In juxtaposition, we place extracts from the accounts of payments and subscriptions:—

Expenditure.	£	s.	d.
Paid Mr. Flewitt, who was withdrawn from Messrs. Swayne and Bovill's . .	9	5	2
Ditto, Mr. James, engineer.	5	18	8
Ditto, Mr. Hemming . .	3	12	0
Ditto, Mr. Ravish . . .	9	18	0
Ditto, Mr. Ashton . . .	4	4	0
Ditto, Mr. Roser	5	2	0
Ditto, Mr. James	4	4	0
Ditto, Mr. Vine	6	12	0
Paid to Blyth's men . . .	161	3	10
Paid to men withdrawn from South-Western Railway.	99	19	6
Total expenditure of Blyth's and South-Western . .	669	6	11
Paid men withdrawn .	124	16	4

Income.	£	s.	d.
Subscriptions received from the men in the employment of Swayne & Bovill	1	15	6
Ditto ditto .	1	4	0
Ditto ditto .	1	0	0
Blyth's smiths	0	1	0
Ditto fitters' turners . .	2	8	6
Ditto, pattern-makers . .	0	13	0
Ditto, smiths	0	17	0
Ditto, hammermen . . .	0	1	0
Ditto ditto	1	2	0
South-Western Railway .	8	9	1
Miller's new turnery . .	6	5	0
Ditto, erecting shop . . .	4	8	6
Ditto, old turnery . . .	4	6	6
Ditto, smiths	2	13	6

Expenditure.	£	s.	d.
Paid Mr. Simmonds, withdrawn from Messrs. Miller's.	21	19	6
Ditto, Mr. Potts	3	4	0
Ditto, Mr. Simmons, Messrs Miller	12	1	4
Paid Mr. Burrows, who was discharged from Horn's, Whitechapel.	6	6	0
Ditto, Mr. Wickstead, ditto	0	15	0
Ditto, Mr. Burrows, ditto	9	18	0
Paid to James Clark, discharged from Stratford Railway Station	3	15	0
Ditto, Mr. Harrison, smith.	9	17	0
Ditto Mr. Clark, ditto	7	10	0
Ditto, Mr. Stokes, withdrawn from Robinson's, Isle of Dogs	10	14	6
Ditto, Mr. Wray, ditto	6	6	2
Deputations to Meetings and Employers	6	14	6
Deputations to Employers.	21	11	6
Deputations	1	12	6
Deputations	0	11	0
Paid Picquets	3	0	6
Paid Picquets, Stratford	0	12	0
Paid Picquets, Blyth's	4	4	0
Paid Picquets, South-Western Railway	4	19	0

Income.	£	s.	d.
Ditto, fitting	1	19	3
Ditto, pattern-makers	0	14	6
Horn's, Whitechapel	1	15	3
Ditto ditto	0	16	6
Stratford Committee	10	12	2
Ditto ditto.	59	2	8
Steam-engine makers	1	0	0
Robinson's	2	4	8
Ditto	2	5	0
Greenwich iron-works' Apprentices	0	2	6
Penn's Apprentices	9	7	3
Ditto ditto	2	5	0
Miller's Apprentices	1	4	3
Greenwich Committee	29	0	6
Southwark, ditto	101	13	0
East end, ditto	52	18	3
Woolwich, ditto	40	0	0
Stratford, ditto	25	3	0
Wolverton, ditto	17	0	7
Northfleet, ditto	4	17	0
Bradford, ditto	4	0	0
Leeds, ditto	3	5	0
Oldham, ditto	2	13	7
Brighton, ditto	2	12	0
Bolton, ditto	2	8	0
Leek, ditto	2	1	0
Sheerness, ditto	1	6	6
Bridgewater, ditto	1	0	0
Smethwick, ditto	0	10	0
And nine other large towns, in all parts of the kingdom; and from the shops of 100 metropolitan firms not enumerated.			

"In a single year, this Amalgamated Society has added 10,000 to its members. It will be seen that it draws voluntary eleemosynary subscriptions from every quarter of the country, for the purpose of 'withdrawing' men from their employers, 'advising them that they have too little wages, and to demand more, on the assurance that they will support them on strike, should they have the 'spirit' to 'ask for more.' It will also be marked with surprise and alarm, that a master's own hands take his money, to apply it to swell the fund by which he is to be reduced to submission; and that his own apprentices, bound by their indentures to disclose everything to his hurt, and to render true and faithful service, are corrupted by older heads and more crafty plotters to turn against their master.

"But this committee points with a deeper sense of regret and humiliation to the charges in the foregoing account for 'picquets.' These are neither more nor less than artisans, hired by voluntary subscription, to become spies upon their brother mechanics—to dog their steps—to threaten, intimidate, and report to the central inquisition, in Little Alie Street, Whitechapel, who, under the protection of that rule of their institution which makes them a secret society, deal out their vengeance upon recalcitrant masters and recusant workmen. From these un-English practices come those secret conspiracies which have been too often brought to light to maim, or murder, sometimes even *for hire*, those who do not implicitly obey the

irresponsible cabal, who plot their mischiefs in security.* 'Our gates,' observes an eminent firm (30th September, 1849) 'have been watched daily, by four or five persons, who have declared their object to be to persuade our men to leave, and to prevent others applying to us for employment.' Other masters can speak to the same appearances, and unfortunately, the well-disposed workmen themselves much more frequently experience the thraldom of these 'picquets,' and quail under the terror of their threats, until they are intimidated into the ranks they would fain avoid.

"Such are a few of the facts which form the thread of this history of selfishness, dictation, eavesdropping, and tyranny from its origin in the various unions, up to its consummation in the Amalgamated Society, and those of their proceedings, which have been the proximate cause of rendering this Association of Masters essential to the protection of their well-disposed workmen, to the preservation of their own rights, and to the vindication of the independence of both.

"A plan so deeply laid and steadily pursued, so extensively eliminated, and widely supported, for making those combinations what those who conspire to effect them call them, 'the ruler of the destinies of the trade,' must either be frustrated, and its authors subdued, or they will subdue us. Their organization and machinery are so complete, their members are so vigilant, and their principles are so captivating to a large class of inefficient or visionary workmen, whose sole object is to solve the problem of procuring the greatest amount of pay for the smallest quantity and worst quality of work, that they threaten to enmesh and absorb the great mass of the operatives by that 'organization of labour' which consists of an appropriation of every vacancy in employment to their own body, a jealous exclusion from the common privileges of labour to all who are not 'legal' members of their craft, and a vigilant tyranny over, and stringent intimidation of, all who presume to indulge in the luxury of independence. It will be seen that the shipwrights on the Wear are at this moment out on strike, chiefly on the simple ground of their masters venturing to assert their right freely to make their own contracts, and for refusing to dismiss their labourers and to engage artisans to perform work that does not require skill. The evil, wide spread and deeply rooted, is not to be eradicated by a hasty compromise, or a temporary cessation of exactions. It is too dangerous, not only to the trade immediately concerned in its operations, but to the general interests of the public, to be suffered to ferment in protracted gestation. It forebodes a war of classes, in which union and combination, craftily qualified, and reduced to method, by a well adapted mechanism, threatens to surprise and overwhelm the neutral and independent members of society, who merely stand upon their individuality. It projects the propagandism of new and dangerous principles of social and political economy, which, if suffered to invade the rights of capital, and the prerogatives of labour, in detail, will ultimately prostrate all liberty of action, and freedom of contract or exchange; and revive, in its most invidious and incongruous forms, the ancient monopolies of trade corporations, and the exploded theories of exclusive property, or vested interest in the practice of the skilled handicrafts. A great question of public liberty is involved in the uncontrolled right of every master to contract for the services of any British subject he pleases; a great principle of social morality is perilled in the prohibition of any member of the body politic from earning his livelihood by the pursuit of any honest calling to which he may apply himself, or to which his circumstances or capacity may direct his energies. A most solemn controversy of state policy arises in the consideration of whether every classification of manual labour is to be permitted to hedge itself round with a wall of separation, which shall vest in the initiated the sole right of pursuing the calling into which they have originally procured admission; because by this means the class of employers, being restricted in the number of apprentices, would be left entirely at the mercy of the dictation of those whom alone they could thereby employ; a dictation which has proved too often destructive to the trade of the country, to the demand for the labour of even those who had proposed to appropriate it exclu-

* The late trials at York, and the less recent prosecutions at Glasgow and Manchester, too amply warrant these conclusions.

sively to themselves, and to those whose ignorant selfishness rashly presumed to tamper with the great and inexorable laws of social and political economy.

"It has been the system of this formidable conspiracy, to take masters in detail —to undermine the discipline of establishments by secret negotiations with the workmen, and to 'withdraw,' on a settled method, and by means of the suborned treachery of men to masters, concealed by the euphuistic phrase 'Statistical Returns,' which supplies to the Star-chamber of the Executive Council every particular connected with the engagement of every artisan, to those whom they can cajole into discontent, by bribing them to become stipendiaries upon the subsistence fund. Ample evidence is afforded in the foregoing extracts from the accounts of the Central Committee, and more is in possession of this Association, that nearly every establishment in London (and, doubtless, the same practices extend to the provinces) secretly contributes to this 'withdrawal' fund, which is really a strike or turn-out upon the most refined and subtle system; and that it is utterly hopeless to arrest the progress of these practices, except by entirely cutting off the resources of the workmen, by a universal cessation of labour and of wages. When bad men conspire, honest men must unite; and this Association utterly protests against the imputation that by combination they are following the practices they condemn. As well may the police force be confounded with the gangs of the lawless they are marshalled to detect; the fleets of merchantmen, sailing in convoy, for mutual protection, be classed with privateers or pirates; or the defence of our coast be placed in the same moral category with the army of invasion.

"To all of us it has been a subject of the deepest pain, to be compelled to visit upon the innocent the common punishment of the guilty. We can but answer, that we punish ourselves the most severely of all, by the loss of interest on our capital, and of profit on our business; that we have no means of distinguishing those who maintain their independence, and render us faithful service, from too many who treacherously apply the wages they receive from our hands to feed the mutiny against us; and that many who belong or contribute to these unions, have the meanness to conceal, or the mendacity to deny it. We are bound, also, to say, that the complaints of being treated with injustice, emanating from those who, disclaiming connexion with the unions, yet find themselves involved in the same common exclusion, are not very reasonable. If they have no sympathy with the Executive Council, they are numerous enough and strong enough to assert their own independence, and to put down its tyranny and dictation. If they either cannot or will not, it is not open to them to complain of the only measures open to their employers to defeat the machinations of their common opponent. Indeed, it is not conceivable that a sixth part of the whole workmen in our employment could assume the regulation of the conditions of our relationship with our hands, without the secret sympathy or passive consent of the vast majority. When the great body of our artisans are sincerely desirous to act with fidelity towards us, and to assert their own independence, there is no doubt that, there being a will, there will be found a way. If they plead coercion, intimidation, even danger to their personal safety, the more thorough and energetic are the measures which are called for from their employers. It may be indeed that even these may not be effectual. The artisans in other trades are invoked to take part in the common conspiracy of labour against capital; and the time may have arrived when, driven to stand by their order, this Association will have to be extended to and embrace all denominations of employers.

"The Executive Committee are anxiously engaged in considering the means by which the causes of this unhappy state of antagonism betwixt classes, whose mutual interests should inspire them with a common spirit of co-operation, may be permanently removed. But to be effectual to secure a desirable consummation, they must be carefully matured, and founded upon well-authenticated data; because it is not a hollow truce but ample securities for a lasting peace, which alone can make the grave step adopted by the members of the Association of simultaneously closing their establishments, either useful or justifiable.

"This only the Association will at present define as the indispensable basis upon which they will alone consent to resume their avocations—

"1. The undoubted and unrestricted right of every labouring man in this free kingdom to follow any honest calling in which employers may desire to engage him.

"2. The unquestionable prerogative of every employer to make what arrangements, and engage what workmen he pleases, upon whatever terms they choose mutually to agree.

"3. The imperative necessity of providing such securities for the full accomplishment and permanent establishment of these conditions as shall frustrate all attempts of self-constituted and irresponsible bodies by intimidation, conspiracy, and dictation, to weaken the rights of employers or the independent privileges of labour.

"(By order of the Committee)

"SIDNEY SMITH,

"*Secretary of the Central Association.*

"30, BUCKLERSBURY,

"*January 17th*, 1852."

APPENDIX IV.

"*The Appeal of the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society to the Trades and the Public.*

"The Executive Council of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers, &c., earnestly entreat that the employers of engineering operatives, the non-society men, their own members, and the public at large, will give their attention to the document printed with this appeal.

"That document contains the minutes of the resolutions come to by the conference of the Employers' Association, and which, marked as 'Private and Confidential,' and 'For Members only,' has been circulated among the trade, so that those belonging to it may send in their assent to or dissent from it.

"Those who do wrong—who perform unjust acts—who violate every rule of equity, and every principle of morality—who tread under foot every aspiration for rational and well defined freedom, always endeavour to work in secret. They understand that—as the *Times* says—'public opinion always gravitates to the right in the long run,' and conscious of their own injustice, they dread to stand openly before it. Therefore this missive is marked 'Private and Confidential.'

"A copy of it, however, has come into our hands, and we, seeking for no secrecy—dreading no amount of publicity, but conscious of the justice of our cause—courting the strictest inquiry—the closest investigation, put it before the world, and ask for an impartial judgment upon it, and while we do so, we cannot with justice to ourselves, or to those whose interests we have been appointed to guard, abstain from plainly expressing our own thoughts and feelings.

"We believe that the resolutions of the Employers' Association express the spirit of the most utter despotism—that in fact, they violate the law which wisely allows of peaceable combinations among all classes—that they contravene the recognised principles of commercial liberty—that they breathe the determination to impose an abhorrent slavery upon all those whose only property is their labour—that they have a tendency to crush that liberty of action which is essential to the welfare of a people—that they are opposed to the interests of the general public—and that they degrade and disgrace humanity. These may be thought strong terms, but they are fully justified by the tyranny which provokes them, for never yet in the history of a free people was such a yoke of serfdom attempted to be imposed upon its commercial and industrial masses.

"Employers of labour should refuse their assent to these monstrous propositions, because their own free action is shackled by them. If they are adopted, the manufacturers will no longer be able to engage whom they please. They are by the first resolution prohibited from admitting into their establishments any member of any society which *takes cognizance* of the contracts between employers and employed. By the second resolution they are prohibited from receiving any deputation *even from their own workmen*, and are *compelled* to dismiss any one connected with such deputation. By the fourth resolution the terms upon which alone they

shall engage their own workmen are authoritatively dictated to them by this disgraceful Association. By the fifth resolution they are prevented from employing any man who shall have offended against the arbitrary will of any former employer. By the sixth resolution they are bound to abide by the award of the Employers' Executive as to any disputes respecting the internal management of their own establishments; and by the seventh resolution they will, if they consent to it, bind themselves to take a part in the quarrels of every other factory, and at their own risk and cost—at the expense of the cessation of their own business—to uphold any individual acts of oppression which the Executive Committee may think fit to sanction.

"We ask you, Employers of England, whether you will consent to abdicate your own right of free action—to endanger your position—to subject yourselves to continual embroilments—to risk your business—to alienate your workmen, in order to serve the selfish ends of a few unworthy members of your own body, led on by an unprincipled mercenary hireling? We entreat you to pause—to think well, both for your own sakes and for the sake of others, before you take so rash, unwise, unjust, and precipitate a step.

"We entreat the non-society men—those whom the combined employers have sacrificed under the pretence of protecting—those to whom the Amalgamated Society has stretched forth the hand of brotherhood and help in the hour of distress, to combine with us to resist this tyranny which is endeavoured to be imposed upon all alike. We call upon them to stand by their order, with the interests of which their own welfare is inseparably bound up. Will they consent to abdicate their right to combine in the most peaceable and legal form? Will they allow themselves to be debarred from delegating one or more of their own body, respectfully to represent any grievances they may feel to their employers? Will they allow themselves to be forced in their individual weakness, to stand separately before the power of capital? Will they acknowledge themselves to be such slaves that they may not employ their own time after their work is done—their own wages after they have earned them, in the way which to them seems best? We cannot believe that they will. We will not give credit to the thought that they are so destitute of all manhood—so indifferent to all freedom, as to submit to a serfdom worse than that of the feudal times—more stringent than any which an act of the Legislature ever dignified with the sanction of law.

"To the members of the Amalgamated Society, to those men who have acted so nobly hitherto, we hope it is scarcely necessary to say one word of exhortation. They can hardly want caution or advice as to how they should treat this more than imperial proclamation upon the part of those who would be their absolute, uncontrolled, irresponsible *masters*. They are well aware of the strength which union gives them, of the benefits which it confers upon them. Upon it they lean for support, when individual injustice is attempted to be practised against them. To it they look for help when work fails, or vindictiveness turns them idle upon the streets. From the funds it enables them to accumulate, they obtain succour when disabled by accident, and in the time of sickness, and when the shadow of death rests upon the house of a member, union prevents the tears of the widow from being rendered more bitter by the cries of her children for bread. Operatives, will you abandon such a holy combination as this? Will you singly expose yourselves to the storm of oppression which is sweeping on toward you? Will you cast off from the only anchor which holds you to independent existence? Will you throw away the only barrier between the wrath of an employer and the workhouse, and the prison? We know that you will not. The very steps which the Employers' Association are now taking forbid you to do so. Notice the fact, a fact from which you should gather wisdom, that while they say you shall have no association, they intend to perpetuate their own. Remember that while they hypocritically pretend to assert the liberty of all, they are denying to you that right of combination which they claim and intend to exercise for themselves. You cannot choose but to resist such glaring, unblushing despotism as this.

"Mark, too, that in order to insure to you any advantages which you 'FANCY' you derive from union, they intend to give you a 'new, sound, and legitimate, benefit society.' What sort of a society do you suppose that will be? Do you think it will support you against injustice? Do you suppose that it will compen-

sate you when you meet with accidents? Do you imagine that it will provide for you when you are thrown labourless upon the world? In short, do you *fancy* that it will preserve for you that power which these 'masters' are so anxious to deprive you of? Do you even think it will allow you to control your own funds? Depend upon it that it will not. It will have employers for trustees, and the tools of employers for officers. Its rules will contain provisions for excluding you for what those employers may call your misconduct—that is, your honest independence. The character givers will become the fund-holders. A man's deposits will be held as pledges for his good behaviour, and his very savings will be moulded into links in the chain which binds him to abject slavery.

"To the general public we appeal for countenance, support, and help. We trust that there is enough of good feeling to put down oppression in its foulest form, wherever it shows its head. We think that in the sturdy English character there is that love of fair play which will not countenance an organization riding rough-shod over isolated individuals forbidden to unite. Thousands of the trading class, in consequence of the power of large accumulated capitals, are passing day by day into the ranks of those who live by labour and wages. Thousands more, struggling in the vortex of competition, see only the same fate in store for their children. Our cause is theirs. Their interests and our own are identical. Even now, out of the earnings of labour, the main portion of the retail trade of the country is supported. The degradation of the skilled labourer involves the loss if not the ruin of the tradesman.

"To the non-society men, to the members of the Amalgamated Society, to the shop-keeper, we say, if for no higher motive than your own interests, support us in this contest. To all society we say do so too, from a higher motive. Do so in the name of Justice! Remember that right is above all, and that those who stand by and permit wrong to triumph, inevitably prepare for themselves and their posterity a fearful retribution.

"For ourselves, our own minds are made up. So long as we have hearts to feel, brains to think, tongues to speak, we will cry aloud against this threatened infraction of all duty alike to God and man. So long as any legal means of resistance are left to us, we will struggle against the treachery, the falsehood, the despotism of the Employers' Association, and if those means at last should fail us, although that is a result beyond probability, scarcely within the bounds of possibility, we, and thousands at our back, rather than yield an unconditional submission, will be prepared to carry with us to other lands that skill and industry which we are not allowed freely to exercise upon our native soil, and thus take from the arrogant, heartless tyrants who now seek to lord it over us—to make their arbitrary wills the rule of our lives—the means of employing that wealth which they value more than the lives or wellbeing of their fellow men.

"(By order of the Council)

"Jos. Musto, *President.*

"Wm. Allan, *Secretary.*

"London, 25, Little Alie Street, Whitechapel,

"*January* 29, 1852."

"*Employers of Operative Engineers and the Amalgamated Society.*

"[Private and Confidential.]

"*For Members only.*

"Central Association of Employers of Operative

"Engineers, &c. Offices, 80, Bucklersbury.

"*London, 24th January*, 1852.

"Dear Sir,—I beg leave to subjoin an extract from the minutes of the Conference held here this day, on the subject of the constitution and rules of this Association.

"It is felt by the Conference that the time has now arrived when the members of the Association should finally determine upon their future course of action; and at the same time that its measures should be perfectly effectual for securing the defensive object for which they are associated.

"After two days' lengthened discussion, and the advantage of much information

to which they have access, the Conference have come to the unanimous resolution to recommend the plan of operations developed in the subjoined Minute of their proceedings, for the adoption of their Members.

"I am, therefore, directed to intimate to you that you are respectfully solicited, *without delay*, to enclose in the envelope herewith sent, your approval of or dissent from the recommendations of the Conference; that a meeting of this Committee will be held on Thursday next, to receive and consider the collective returns from the members; and that at that meeting the whole mode, terms, and time of re-opening the various establishments will be finally determined; or suggestions for these objects prepared for the consideration of an aggregate meeting of the whole members of the Association.

"(By order of the Conference)

"I remain, dear Sir,

"Yours faithfully,

"SIDNEY SMITH, *Secretary*.

"[IN STRICT CONFIDENCE.]

"*For Members only.*

"*At a Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Central Association of Employers of Operative Engineers, to confer with a Deputation from the Lancashire Committee, held on the 24th of January*, 1852.

"The Conference proceeded to take into consideration the steps to be recommended for adoption by the members of the Association, in consequence of the perseverance of the Amalgamated Society and other Trades' Unions in adhering to rules and practices equally inimical to the free action and just rights of the artisan and labouring classes, and to the exercise, by employers, of the fair control which every master is entitled to maintain over his own establishment.

"The Conference further, in consideration that the demands of the members and executive council of the Amalgamated Society and of other Trades' Unions, had not been withdrawn within the time limited by the Committee; and that the various unjustifiable practices of these combinations had not been disavowed by any body of the artisans lately in the employment of the members of the Association; determined that it was indispensably necessary—for the protection of the operative and labouring classes from the annoyances, intimidation, personal violence, and exclusion from employment, to which they had been habitually subjected by the influence, organization, and ascendancy in the various shops of members of these Unions, and for the relief of employers from the interference and dictation thereby inflicted on them—to advise the members of the Association universally to adopt the following measures of self-defence and self-vindication.

"First. That no member of this Association shall engage, admit into (or, after he shall have become cognizant of the same), continue in his service or employment, in any capacity whatever, any member of any Trades' Union or Trades' Society, which takes cognizance of, professes to control, or practises interference with, the regulations of any establishment, the hours or terms of labour, the contracts or agreements of employers or employed, or the qualification or terms of service.

"Second. That no deputation of workmen, of Trades' Unions, committees, or other bodies, with reference to any objects referred to in Article 1st, be received by any member of this Association on any account whatever; but that any person forming part of, instigating, or causing such deputation, shall be dismissed forthwith; it being still perfectly open to any workman, individually, to apply on such subject to his employer; who is recommended to be at all times open and accessible to any personal representation of his individual operatives.

"Third. That employers be especially solicited, as much as possible, to avoid the delegation of the engagement or contract of their workmen to others, and to take a more personal superintendence or control of engagements with their hands—and in the most especial manner, that they impress upon every person engaged by them their anxiety that, in case of any molestation, annoyance, or obstruction in pursuing their avocations, or procuring employment, they should at once apply and complain to the principals of the establishment, who should sift such com-

plaint to the bottom, and to dismiss all persons who have been proved to have offered or abetted such molestation or obstruction.

"Fourth. That no member of this Association shall engage or continue in his employment any person whatsoever, until he has read, in presence of one witness at least, to such person the rules, if any, of his establishment, and also the following.

DECLARATION, *by the undersigned, on engaging in the employment of* [here insert name, address, and trade of employer] *I*, A. B. [here insert, Christian and Surname of person declaring] *do hereby honestly, and in its simplest sense and plainest meaning, declare, that I am neither now, nor will, while in your employment, become a member or contributor, or otherwise belong to or support any Trades' Union or Society, which, directly or indirectly, by its Rules, or in its meetings or transactions of its business, or by means of its officers or funds, takes cognizance of, professes to control, or interferes with the arrangements or regulations of this or any other manufacturing or trading establishment, the hours or terms of labour, the contracts or agreements of employers or employed, or the qualifications or period of service. I do also further declare, that I have no purpose or intention to call in question the right of any man to follow any honest calling in which he may desire to engage, or to make what arrangements, and engage what workmen he pleases, upon whatever terms they choose mutually to agree.*

(Signed)

Dated the *day of* 185

Signed

Witness

"Fifth. That no member of this Association shall engage any workman who has been previously in employment elsewhere, without ascertaining from what establishment he was discharged, and whether the cause of his leaving had any reference to an infringement of the objects of the foregoing declaration.

"Sixth. That no member of this Association shall, on any pretext whatever, permit or submit to dictation, interference, or direct or indirect tampering with the management of his establishment, or the engagement or conditions of the service of his workmen; but that whenever any attempts are made to abrogate or compromise the free operation of the foregoing provisions, such member shall at once apply, if he requires it, for the advice, award, and assistance of the Executive Committee, who shall be bound to afford him every assistance and support called for by the circumstances of the particular case.

"Seventh. That, in the event of a strike or turn-out occurring in the establishment of any member of this Association, for reasons or from causes which shall, in the opinion of the Executive Committee, entitle the employer so assailed to its countenance and support, it is hereby and shall continue to be distinctly understood, that all the members of the Association shall sustain, according to their power and ability, such member in upholding the objects of the Association; it being expressly understood and declared, that no acts shall warrant the interference of this Committee, except such as it is the declared object of the foregoing provisions to prevent.

"Eighth. That, in order as far as possible lies in the power of this Association, to obviate any inconvenience which may arise to meritorious workmen, for being deprived of any advantages they may fancy they derive from the legitimate objects from which existing Trades' Unions or Societies have been diverted, this Association gives full power and authority to the Executive Committee, to submit for its sanction a plan for the establishment of a new, sound, and legitimate Benefit Society."

APPENDIX V.

The following document will show the present feeling and action of the Amalgamated Societies with reference to strikes.

THE THREATENED STRIKE OF THE SPINNERS AND MINDERS.—At a meeting recently held by the members of the Preston branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engi-

neers, Machinists, &c., numbering in the aggregate upwards of 20,000, the subject relating to the pending strike was brought forward, when it was resolved:—That a memorial be presented to the delegates of the spinners and self-acting minders for their consideration, of which the following is a copy.

To the Delegates of the Spinners and Self-Acting Minders about to assemble at a Meeting in Preston.

"GENTLEMEN,—We the members of the Preston branch of the *Amalgamated Society of Engineers, Machinists*, &c., beg leave most respectfully to intimate that the subject of the pending strike for an additional advance of wages was considered at a meeting recently convened, when it was agreed that a memorial embodying the sentiments of the meeting be presented to the delegates, not only to inform them that we could not consistently sanction any movement which had for its object the compulsion of the spinners and self-acting minders to strike for an advance upon the 7½ per cent., which has lately been conceded; but at the same time we strenuously exhort them not to carry out their contemplated enterprise under any consideration. We would respectfully submit that the present is not the time to commence the agitation, inasmuch as neither the critical state of the Continent nor commercial affairs generally would justify the contest upon which you purpose entering; not to speak of the indications of a scarcity of food during the winter, which will render it still more difficult for you to succeed, particularly as the masters have unanimously resolved not to comply with your solicitation upon any consideration whatever. Under these circumstances, therefore, we would venture to suggest the propriety of postponing for a short time, at least, the struggle upon which you are preparing to enter, without wishing for a moment to dictate the course we would wish you to pursue, we hesitate not to say, as the result of some experience in movements of this nature, as well as from a careful and unbiased consideration of the subject in question, that there is not the slightest possibility of your gaining an advance at the present time, at least, on the contrary, we have reason to believe you will entail upon yourselves such sufferings and distress as have never yet been equalled by the many fruitless contests which have previously taken place. That strikes are not so popular as many may imagine, is strikingly apparent from what occurred at Colne (see *Manchester Examiner and Times*, leading article of Wednesday, August 22nd, 1860), where coercion and intimidation have been frequently resorted to, in order to extort contributions for the operatives already out on strike, because they were unwilling to assist in perpetuating struggles that can do no good whatever, but which are sure to result in a vast amount of evil both morally, socially, and physically. Before you commence so desperate a struggle as the one which is pending will inevitably be, permit us to advise you to ask yourselves the question, whether you are able to continue it so long as to oblige your employers to accede to your demand, for if not, it would be folly to commence it, inasmuh as an additional defeat,—which we feel convinced you will experience,—would inspire confidence in your masters of defeating you ever afterwards. Your masters, it is true, may lose both time and money, and, if they do that patiently and quietly they must win in the end, as they have invariably done before; but alas, what fearful odds are against you, time, or money's worth, you lose altogether; the members of your household acquire bad habits, which may not change afterwards,—your children's ruined health, which years may not renew to them,—yourselves thrown back as regards your chances in life,—your earnings changed into debts, and the prospects which some of you may have of self-education, self-improvement, and of raising yourselves above your present position, may be gone for many years, yea, gone perhaps for ever.—You sacrifice everything for what, depend upon it, a few months at most will prove to you to have been an unsound attempt to make your masters pay for what they simply decline to buy, that is, your labour at a price they do not consider fair, for, be it remembered, that they have an opinion as well as you, and each have a right to their own. Thus, then, have we ventured to express our opinions on the contemplated struggle between yourselves and your masters, and we hope you will receive them in the same friendly spirit as that which has dictated them. For though it very often happens that in days of prosperity, remonstrances are

disregarded, we hope, notwithstanding, that the sufferings and distress which are sure to result from a contest with the masters will cause many to reflect upon the serious position in which they will be placed, and to inquire if any good can possibly result from such an amount of misery as they will inevitably experience if they turn out now. That reason and reflection may be brought to bear upon the question, and the necessity for a strike entirely obviated by discarding any interference on the part of strangers, and that some amicable mode of arranging your differences may be speedily determined upon, is the sincere wish of the members of the Preston Branch of the Amalgamated Society, which will shortly be applied to by the neighbouring branches as to how we intend to act, and be guided by the answer we return to their respective communications. We have the honour to remain, gentlemen, yours, &c., MEMBERS of the ABOVE SOCIETY."—*Preston Guardian*, 1st Sept., 1860.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

STRIKE IN THE COTTON TRADE AT PRESTON,

IN 1853.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By J. LOWE.

I. *Peculiarities of the Cotton Trade in Preston.—Progress and Condition of Preston.*

The peculiar circumstances which distinguish Preston from all other manufacturing towns chiefly arise from its geographical position. Standing upon the borders of an extensive and populous agricultural district, the Fylde, it first receives the constant stream of immigration which proceeds from the fields into the factories, and is moreover supplied with such a provision market as enables it to offer the temptation of cheaper living than any of its rivals. How extensive this immigration has hitherto been may be inferred from the result of an inquiry set on foot for the private purposes of the Anti-Corn-Law League some years ago; when, comparing the registers of birth with those of burial, in the agricultural parishes north and west of Preston, it was found that for every three births there were only two burials; in other words, that about thirty per cent. of the population constantly migrated from the places of their nativity.

As Preston is the first halting place for this immigrant stream, and as the staple of its manufacture mainly consists of that low order of goods which is required for the Indian and Chinese markets, and which requires no very high degree of manufacturing skill, it naturally follows that it enjoys a very abundant supply of labour, not perhaps very firstrate in quality, but sufficient for the purposes of its trade. In stating this, however, it should be understood that there are in this town some few establishments where the very highest description of cotton goods is manufactured, requiring the best quality of labour, of which (when needed) the cheapness of living, low house rent, and the pleasant and healthy position of the town, insure an abundant supply. From this it will be seen that there are two classes of operatives in Preston, the skilled and the unskilled, and that the unskilled predominate in numbers; facts which are, indeed, true of all factory towns, but which are

highly important to be considered in analyzing the condition of the cotton trade in Preston.

A well supplied labour market, cheap food, and consequent cheapness of land and building materials, are great temptations to the capitalist, and we are not therefore surprised to find that Preston, despite its distance from the great cotton port and the great central goods market, has grown very rapidly to be a manufacturing town of the first importance. It is, in fact, the second manufacturing town in Lancashire, and while Manchester, the metropolis of the cotton trade, has been steadily retrograding as a manufacturing town (owing to causes the very converse of those which have operated in favour of Preston), this latter has been, and is now, increasing with a rapidity which has probably no parallel.

It is to be noticed of Preston (and there is no exception to the fact), that whenever disputes have been prevalent between the employer and the employed throughout the cotton district, they have never originated in that town; but having begun elsewhere, have infected Preston. This is doubtless chiefly attributable to the abundant supply of labour which Preston enjoys, which not only tends to keep down the price of that commodity, but gives the employing class an immense power of control over the employed.

The operation of this has hitherto been, that there has never yet been any serious or general difference between the operatives and employers of Preston until discontent has become very general and very extreme throughout other parts of the district. Then, indeed, excited feelings getting the better of prudence, the force of example acting with its usual power upon uncultivated minds, the advice of over zealous leaders swaying them with dangerous power, and the pride of their order hardening them into a desperate and obstinate resistance, the Preston operatives have engaged in those long and terrible struggles with their employers, for which they have obtained an unenviable notoriety, and from which nothing has ever yet resulted but absolute and irretrievable loss to all parties concerned, and great injury to the trade and progress of the town. In other towns, strikes have resulted in concession to the demands of the operatives; in Preston, never.

Before 1853, the last strike of any importance in Preston occurred in the year 1836. In that year, the early part of which was thought to be very profitable to the manufacturers, dissatisfaction was very generally expressed by the operative spinners throughout the district at the rate of wages which they were receiving. Disputes at Bolton had resulted in a concession by the masters of the advance required by the operatives; and, when that was accomplished, the leaders of the Bolton malcontents, having acquired a taste for agitation, proceeded to Preston, held meetings there, induced the people to rise against their employers, and finally persuaded them into a general strike, which lasted for thirteen weeks. Perhaps the worst feature of this strike was that it involved in its terrible consequences large bodies of operatives who were not really parties to the dispute.

The quarrel was between the spinners and the employers; yet the cessation from labour of 660 spinners compelled into unwilling inaction nearly 8000 weavers, card-room hands, and other operatives. The employers, determined to resist the tactics of the Union to the last extremity, banded themselves into an association, and after offering an advance, *on condition that the operatives would abandon their Union*, remained completely passive. After the strike had lasted about nine weeks, the employers opened their mills, and provided work for all who would accede to their terms; they also imported spinners from other parts of the district, and finally, after an incalculable amount of misery had been sustained by the operatives, and more than £107,000 had been lost to the town, the spinners were compelled to succumb and to accept the terms which they had previously rejected. During this strike the amount of relief afforded by the funds of the Union was very trifling, and the great mass of the operatives were dependant upon public alms for a wretched subsistence. The demoralization arising out of all this misery was naturally very great. Among the results of this contest has been included the adoption of self-acting mules, which enabled the employers to dispense with a great many spinners. Such was the celebrated Preston strike of 1836-7.

From that time up to 1853 no very important dispute arose between the employers and operatives of Preston. Isolated strikes occurred, indeed (as they always will occur), but with no very serious results. The operative spinners kept their Union alive, and continued to augment its funds by subscriptions. The Masters' Association was never finally dissolved, but took cognizance of disputes having reference to wages up to the year 1846, after which it is said to have been inactive up to 1853. Very early in that year we find the factory operatives of Lancashire moving, and gradually throughout the whole of the cotton district demands for higher wages were made of individual employers. In a requisition made by the spinners and self-acting minders of Preston, in the first week of April, 1853, it is alleged that the public press had borne testimony to the flourishing condition of the cotton trade for two years past; that in 1847, a year of great distress, a reduction of ten per cent. had been made upon wages, which had been submitted to by the operatives, "confidently hoping that whenever trade did revive, the reduction would be restored;" arguing from these grounds, the requisitionists urged upon the employers that they would not "refuse to restore at a time of prosperity that which, when trade was in a languishing state, necessity compelled them to take from the hard-earned wages of their operatives." This requisition, and other similar demands, met with varied success; in some cases being responded to by a prompt and willing acquiescence, in others by a partial grant of the advance, and in some by refusal or neglect. Some few isolated strikes began to be heard of through the district; many of which, however, were speedily accommodated, and it was not until the end of May that the agitation manifested itself in any-

thing like an organized shape. At this time local committees were formed among the factory operatives of many of the principal towns (Stockport, Blackburn, Bolton, and Preston, taking the lead); central meetings of delegates from these committees were held; and resolutions of these meetings were published, to the effect that nothing short of an "*unconditional** advance of ten per cent." would be accepted. A resolution to this effect having been passed at a meeting of delegates held at Bolton on Sunday the 5th of June, a meeting of power-loom weavers was held in Preston on the following Thursday, at which Mr. George Cowell (afterwards so celebrated for his connexion with the Preston agitation) spoke at some length, and, after stating that the Preston hands were working for nearly ten per cent. less than any other town, and about twenty per cent. below what was paid in Oldham, *where the hands always kept up a Union and a fund for their support whenever a master attempted to encroach upon their wages*, he declared that he "had resolved to try if he could not arouse the operatives of Preston to bestir themselves with a view to obtaining an advance of wages." At this meeting, a circular was adopted for transmission to the employers, urging the demand for an advance of ten per cent.

At this time, however, about 7000 of the Stockport operatives were on strike. The associated masters of that town, having resolved to make a combined resistance to the demands of the operatives, refused the advance, and the Operative Unions determined, by directing their whole strength against it, to carry Stockport as it were by storm. In this Stockport dispute a new element arose. Stockport, from its position as the southernmost of the Lancashire cotton towns, is in many respects the converse of Preston. Its labour market is not so well supplied, and the cost of living is higher. These circumstances have tended to raise the average of Stockport wages over the general average of the trade. But Manchester is subject to all these conditions to a still greater extent than Stockport, and the average of Manchester wages is consequently still higher in the scale. Now when the Stockport hands struck, they gave their employers the option of three courses; either to give them ten per cent., or to refer the question to arbitration, or to take an average of wages *within a circle of ten miles drawn around Manchester*. To the last of these propositions the employers replied by offering an average of wages *taken all over the trade*. We have been particular in explaining this point in order to give some idea of the complicated nature of the matters in dispute between the operatives and their employers.

Seven thousand operatives of Stockport seemed determined to remain firm in their position, and sympathy and money flowed in amain from all parts of the district. The country was agitated far and wide, and delegates held public meetings everywhere; but nowhere was the

* The word *unconditional* referred to the condition attempted to be enforced by some of the employers, that the operatives should not subscribe to any Union, a condition which was naturally received with great disfavour by the operatives.

agitation fiercer or more successful than at Blackburn; at Preston enthusiastic meetings were held weekly, but the subscriptions did not average more than one-fourth of the amount sent from Blackburn.

The employers of Blackburn had for the most part granted an advance satisfactory to their workpeople, and the operatives of the latter, although still waiting for an advance, contributed largely to the support of the Stockport turn-outs.* In the beginning of August, the Stockport employers, either despairing of a successful resistance, or unwilling to permit their mills to remain inactive any longer, conceded advances satisfactory to the operatives, who returned to work with the feeling that they had won a victory.

When the agitation of this struggle was convulsing the cotton district, it might naturally have been expected that the operatives would be in a very impressionable and excited state. Class was, in a measure, arrayed against class, and both masters and men (being ever prone to generalize) were only too ready to regard each other in the light of enemies in a state of active hostility. What might have been the result of conciliatory measures and an earnest endeavour to convince the operatives of the imperative necessity of working together in a friendly spirit we are not enabled to pronounce, as no such endeavour was made; but, on the other hand, the crude attempts at curbing the spirit then afloat only tended to inflame the evil. At that time the public journals teemed with police reports in which the most trival matters in dispute between operatives and their employers were brought up for the adjudication of magistrates. Numberless stories, too, were rife, about the discharge of hands for contributing to the support of the Stockport turn-outs, and although these probably lost neither in number nor in circumstance as reported by the agitators, many of them were doubtless perfectly true. The effects of this soon became painfully obvious. Acts of insubordination, perfectly inexcusable on the part of the perpetrators, became common; and employers complained (perhaps not without reason) that it was impossible to preserve the discipline of their mills. When to all this existing excitement was added the news of the Stockport victory, a state of feeling was engendered which, if properly considered, gives a key to all the subsequent events.

While the Preston operatives were agitating and subscribing on behalf of Stockport, they had not been neglectful of their own interests. Some of the Preston employers had already given the advance, and between them and their operatives a feeling existed which, if not positively good, was sufficiently so to warrant the expectation that no open rupture would take place.† That this, however, was nothing but the calm that precedes a storm, a few short weeks sufficed to show.

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* In the week ending July 2nd, the fund for relieving the Stockport turn-outs amounted to £610, in the week ending July 16th it was £628, in the follow-week it rose to £856, and next week £895.

† Referring to the local papers, we find that in the very week when Mr. Cowell stood up in the Orchard and congratulated the people upon the Stockport *victory*, the hands of Messrs. H—— and M—— (who had received an advance)

By the middle of August, the committees of agitators, relieved from further trouble with regard to Stockport, concentrated their energies upon Preston, which was selected as the next battle-field for the agitation. On Sunday, August 14th, a meeting of delegates was held at Stockport, at which it was resolved to support a strike at Preston; and this was followed up by a meeting of the Preston operatives, called by the spinners, at the Temperance Hall in that town, on the 22nd of the same month. Two committees were organized in Preston to conduct the agitation, one of weavers, and the other of spinners; subscriptions were levied throughout the mills to provide a fund for any emergency, and the speeches of the agitators began to breathe a sterner spirit of hostility against the employers. It is, indeed, greatly to be feared that much of the subsequent evils is to be traced to these crude speeches at the outset of the dispute; it is to be feared that the unconsidered declamations of these men (who, being for the most part new to the task of haranguing large meetings, were not likely to be very reserved or very discreet in their language) were accepted as the earnest utterances of the people. If so, we can scarcely wonder at the position subsequently taken by the employers. It was upon these speeches that they based the serious accusation that, even if ten per cent. were granted, the operatives would not be content without an equalization, and that they would take the masters in detail and screw them up to a level with the highest prices paid. On the 18th of August, Mr. Cowell declared in the Orchard:—"When they got a universal ten per cent. they would have a standard list of prices, and make every manufacturer pay as nearly as possible the same rate of wages." In the same speech great offence was given to the manufacturers by the exhortation of the speaker to *acknowledge* the authority of the committee as paramount to the employers:—"The committee requested that, for the present, no mill would cease labour, whatever might be the result of their application for an advance; but keep to their work until they were directed by their committee to tender their notices. If they did this, *the committee would be acknowledged;*—they would help the hands, and they would work out the result for them. Whilst they resisted anything short of a ten per cent., let them keep peaceably at work until such time as they were *ordered* to give in their notices; let them serve a legal notice, and then the committee would pay them what would enable them to live as long as their masters might think proper to keep their machinery standing."

Unwise and inflammatory as such speeches undoubtedly were, we cannot help thinking that the employers made a great mistake in taking these utterances for the real sentiments of the operatives; for, by so doing, they forced them to act them out. They forgot that the agitators arose from the agitation, and not the agitation from the agitators, and that by accepting the speeches of these men as

took an excursion to Fleetwood, and that previous to starting they marched past the residence of their employers, the band playing "The Fine Old English Gentleman."

the oracles of the people, they placed them in the very position from which they were most anxious to exclude them.

The *Preston Guardian* of the 27th of August, 1853, announced that in all the mills in Preston and its neighbourhood, with the exception of five, the spinners were working at the advanced rate. Messrs. ——'s mill had stopped on the previous day, for reasons which will be hereafter adverted to, and at the mills of five other firms notices were served by the hands. During the following week, one master gave the advance, and this reduced the number of mills at which the spinners were serving their notices to four.

The cause of the turn-out at the first named mill has been so prominently brought forward in supporting the course adopted by the Masters' Association, that a short recapitulation of the leading facts will not be out of place here. The dispute arose from a misunderstanding as to the terms of a verbal agreement supposed to have been made between the manager and the hands; the latter being of opinion that the former had promised them an advance of a halfpenny upon some sevenpenny cloth, and a penny upon some eightpenny; the manager declaring that he never made any such agreement, and had no authority so to do. When the advance was actually made, it was found to be in the ratio of $7\frac{5}{8}$ upon the sevenpenny and $8\frac{3}{4}$ upon the eightpenny: a difference slight indeed (perhaps not exceeding a few shillings over the entire mill), but quite sufficient, in the existing state of feeling, to give rise to some excitement and an impression that the operatives were being treated with bad faith. There can be no doubt that there was great misapprehension somewhere, and, as the manager made a public declaration that he had not made the alleged agreement, there is a presumption that the hands were labouring under a mistake. It has never, however, been alleged that any attempt was made to explain that mistake; on the contrary, it is said, the hands were told that if they were not satisfied they might go about their business, and it is quite certain that the whole body of weavers (380 women) turned out without an endeavour being made to pacify or bring them to reason. In the eyes of the employers, this case was greatly aggravated by the belief (whether well-founded or not has never yet been shown) that the operatives of Messrs. —— were prompted in the course which they adopted by the delegates, and there can be no doubt that the indignation excited by this belief had more to do than any other feeling with the resolution now arrived at by the Masters' Association.

Before entering upon an explanation of this resolution, we may not inappropriately offer a few remarks upon the position occupied by the Association.

To impartial observers it has naturally seemed that, if combination were permissible to the employers, it could not be refused to the men. In meeting this natural objection, it has been customary for the defenders of the employers to declare that they were *driven* into combination for self-defence, and *in consequence* of the combination organized by the operatives. This, however, was clearly not the

case; for it can be proved that the Masters' Association was formally reconstructed before the Operatives' Union took any step in the dispute. From documents in our possession, we find that the Masters' Association, which had been dormant since 1846, was revived, extended, and organized upon a new foundation as early as the 18th of March, 1853.* This fact is highly important, for it completely demolishes the argument that the masters were driven to combine by the schemes and machinations of the delegates.

The first public act of this re-organized Masters' Association was the publication of the following manifesto, dated the 15th of September.

TO THE OPERATIVES OF PRESTON AND THE NEIGHBOURHOOD.

A month has now elapsed since the Associated Masters of Preston and the Neighbourhood, yielding to the request of the operatives employed in their respective mills, and after a full consideration of the circumstances of each particular case, agreed to give an advance upon the then rate of wages.

Notwithstanding this concession, and the wish thereby shown on their part to settle the question in a liberal manner, the masters regret to find, that the operatives have put themselves under the guidance of a designing and irresponsible body, who, having no connexion with this town, nor settled position anywhere, but living upon the earnings of the industrious operatives, interfere, for their own purpose and interest, with the relation between master and servant, create where it does not exist, and foster and perpetuate where unhappily it does, a feeling of dissatisfaction and estrangement, and in a spirit of assumption, arrogate to themselves the right to determine, and dictate to the operatives the means of enforcing the conditions upon which they shall be PERMITTED to labour.

To this spirit of tyranny and dictation the masters can no longer submit, in justice either to the operatives or to themselves; hence they are reluctantly compelled to accept the only alternative left: to close their mills until those now on strike are prepared to resume their work, and a better understanding is established between the employer and the employed.

In adopting this course they are fully sensible of the serious evils, moral and social, which must attend it, and which the sad experience of 1836 must painfully

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* These documents are copies of resolutions passed at meetings held at the Bull Inn, Preston, on the 18th and 31st of March respectively. At the former of these, it was resolved:—

1. That every member shall support and receive the support of the Association.
2. That funds for carrying out the objects of the Association be provided by a levy upon the nominal horse-power employed by each member, at such times and in such amounts as may be agreed upon at a general meeting.
3. That a committee of five (three to form a *quorum*) be appointed, to whom all matters affecting the interests of the Association be referred, and whose decisions shall be binding upon the members.

Here two resolutions are omitted in our copy.

6. That each firm shall, on admission, pay 5*s*. per nominal horse-power to the funds of the Association.

At the latter meeting, the following resolutions were adopted:—

1. That the Master Cotton-Spinners' Association be reorganized, in conformity with the resolution passed at a meeting held on the 18th inst., with such additions and modifications as the meeting may approve of.
2. That Messrs. [seven gentlemen are here named] be a committee, with power to fill up vacancies that may occur.
3. That a call of 5*s*. per nominal horse-power be made, and that the secretary make the requisite application to each member.
4. That it be imperative upon all members of the Association not to employ any self-acting minder or hand-mule spinner without a written discharge from his previous employer.
5. That any master-spinner whose establishment is without the borough, and who has not previously been a member of the Association be ineligible.

The Operatives' Committee for sending money to Stockport was organized in Preston on the 16th of June; and the Committee for conducting the movement in Preston, on the 29th of August.

recall to the recollection of many. They feel, however, that the responsibility is not theirs: it rests with those who have recklessly created the difficulty, and forced this decision upon them.

This document was signed by thirty-seven of the associated firms; including those between whom and their hands disputes were still pending; a fact which the operatives were not slow to urge in refutation of the assertion that the associated masters *had* given the advance.

The precedent of 1836 was, we fear, not without its effect in inducing many of the employers to subscribe to the expedient of locking up their mills. The easy victory which a few weeks of starvation gave to the masters upon that occasion seemed to promise a victory no less decisive and no less speedy on this occasion. The truth is, these gentlemen did not thoroughly understand the extent to which the railroad, the penny post, and the public press have revolutionized society; they did not grasp the fact that the same appliances which had extended and simplified their business had rendered much easier even the business of agitation; and we know it for a fact, that it was the general opinion of the Preston Masters' Association, at the time of issuing the document quoted above, that the lock-out would be brought to a close within six weeks, by the surrender of the operatives. With a distrust of one another which appears not a little singular under the circumstances, the members of the Association mutually bound themselves by a bond conditioned for the payment of £5000 to observe the resolutions of their body, and to keep good faith by each other. Grave doubts have been mooted as to the legality of such a bond, and whether a court of Equity would not destroy the effect of an instrument so plainly subversive of the best interests of trade. On one occasion during the dispute an attempt was made by a member of the Association to break through the fetters which bound him, and he was threatened with the penalty of the bond; but it is worthy of observation that at the very outset of the business the members of the Masters' Association had so little confidence in each other that they required some more tangible and substantial security than a pledge of honour and mutual good faith. At this date there were four mills on strike on account of the weavers, and four others where the spinners' notices were within one week of expiring.

When the determination of the Association was made known through the town, the excitement was naturally very great, and a public meeting in the Orchard was immediately called by the delegates, and was very numerously attended. An attempt was made to get up a display by engaging bands of music, but the magistrates, wisely fearing for the tranquillity of the town, forbade all such public demonstrations, and their order was obeyed by the operatives without the slightest attempt at resistance. At this meeting the operatives pledged themselves to remain firm to their demands, and separated with three cheers for the ten per cent.

During this week a few charges of intimidation were brought before the magistrates at the Town Hall. The defendants were mere lads, and the operatives, conceiving that an oppressive attempt was

being made to fix upon them the disgrace of being riotously disposed, resolved upon defending them. The sentences of the magistrates were consequently appealed against, and the prosecutions were entirely abandoned; the extreme youth of the defendants having probably much to do with their escape.

During the week succeeding these events no less than three public meetings were held by the operatives; the funds levied in support of the turn-outs amounted to £214, and the walls of the town began to display those inflammatory placards which are the surest symptoms of an agitation. This week the magistrates prohibited all open-air meetings after sunset. Some endeavours were made on the part of the Spinners' Committee to stop the coming struggle by holding a conference with the Committee of Masters, but the reply of the latter was, that they could not acknowledge the Spinners' Committee, nor their right to interfere in the dispute. This attempt was subsequently repeated in a more definite shape by the weavers; who proposed that "a deputation of employers should meet a deputation of the workpeople, for the purpose of discussing and arranging the differences;" or, if that were objectionable, "that the matter in dispute should be referred to arbitration, each party to appoint an equal number of experienced men unconnected with the strike, and that R. T. Parker, Esq., M.P., should be the umpire." If neither of these courses should meet with the approbation of the masters, the weavers respectfully requested *them* to make a proposal. This communication fared no better than that of the spinners; for the masters utterly refused to acknowledge the existence of the committees.

Matters now began to wear a very serious aspect in Preston; the public (more especially the tradesmen) began to feel very great alarm at the course which affairs were taking; and the correspondence columns of the local prints teemed with exhortations addressed to both parties, that they would seriously ponder before committing the prosperity of the town to such dangerous straits, and various expedients were suggested for accommodating the differences. Both sides, however, seemed determined to fight it out, and were deaf alike to expostulation and advice.

Next week, the public meetings in the borough were fast and furious, and the subscriptions rose so rapidly that £1,054 were raised for the relief of the weavers then on strike.

About this time some endeavour was made by the clergy of the town to act as mediators between the parties; the late Rev. S. F. Page and the Rev. W. Walling being especially active. Their ministration was not, however, acceptable to the operatives, who appeared to think them actuated by partisanship. By far the wisest and most temperate effort at conciliation was made by a respectable body of the clergy, and gentry, and tradesmen of the town, at a conference held at Welch's Temperance Hotel, on Thursday, the 13th of October. This conference was attended by the Rev. J. O. Parr, the Vicar of Preston, and many influential clergymen and laymen. George Cowell attended before the conference to explain

and defend the course adopted by the power-loom weavers. The Vicar stated that he had held private and friendly interviews with various gentlemen connected with the cotton trade, with a view to avert the impending suspension of labour. He stated that the result of his interviews with the employers was such as to lead him to believe that they would not listen to any propositions towards a settlement until the hands had renounced all connexion with the Union. On the part of the operatives it was asked whether, in case they agreed to make any concession, there was any guarantee that their employers would listen to them, adding that it was useless attempting to concede if they would not be listened to. No one present could hold out any encouragement to the men that their employers would hear of any terms short of the abandonment of the Union. The operative leaders seemed to think that so long as the masters had a Union which dictated the terms on which they should employ their hands, their only safety was in keeping up their (the operatives') Union. This attempt to bring the contending parties together thus proved a failure. It was, however, thought by some parties that the operative leaders at that time—little dreaming of the money support which afterwards was forthcoming, and shrinking to some extent from the fearful responsibility of an all but universal lock-out, which was on that day on the eve of accomplishment—might have been induced to make considerable concessions if they had felt assured that their employers would have listened to a compromise. All endeavours, however, were equally in vain. On Saturday, the 15th of October, the time of the notices, which had been served, expired, and the key was turned upon a large proportion of the Preston operatives; by the end of the next week forty-five firms had stopped working, and two more were running under notice. In all Preston, fifteen firms declared their intention of acting independently.

These firms continued running throughout the lock-out. Their aggregate horse-power was about 500, and they gave employment to above 3000 hands. The horse-power stopped by the lock-out was nearly 3000, and about 18,000 hands were rendered inactive. With an exaggeration perhaps very natural, the number was then variously estimated at from 20,000 to 30,000.

Although Preston was now the centre of the labour-battle, the contest had attained to much wider limits. A large number of the operatives of Bury (employed both in the fustian and in the cotton trade), others at Accrington and Burnley, a large proportion of the industrial population of Bacup, Padiham, Newchurch, and Rawtenstall, and a great many of the operatives of Manchester (including the dyers, who were sustaining a prolonged and unanimous strike) were unemployed. The number of unemployed at that time in Lanc shire may be moderately estimated at 65,000. Second only in importance to the Preston lock-out was the important strike at Wigan ; where, out of a population of 32,000, 5000 colliers and 6000 factory operatives were on strike.

On the 4th of November, the Masters' Association held its first

meeting since the closing of the mills, and published the following resolutions:—

"That whereas an advance of wages was offered to the operatives of Preston and the neighbourhood on the 19th day of August last, which offer was dictated more by a desire to preserve the harmony and general good feeling that then prevailed in the town, than by anything in the state of trade warranting such advance; and whereas the same has not been generally accepted by the operatives, through the interference of the same mischievous and irresponsible parties who have been the cause of all the distress brought upon the town; and whereas the prospects of the trade have materially altered for the worse,—it is therefore the unanimous opinion of this meeting that whenever the time shall arrive for the re-opening of the mills, the rate of wages shall be the same as was paid on or before the 1st of March last, subject however to such alterations as may be recommended by the committee in particular cases.

"That this meeting on its rising do adjourn to Thursday, the 1st of December next, but that the committee be requested to call a meeting at an earlier period if they are of opinion that it would be conducive to the *establishment* of the question on the basis of the foregoing resolution, provided also they are satisfied that the general body of the operatives are prepared to emancipate themselves from the dictation of parties who have an interest in prolonging the unfortunate dispute between the employers and the employed."

These resolutions drew replies from the committees of the operatives, who were naturally irritated at continued imputations upon the motives of their leaders; but the most just and severe criticism upon these resolutions was made by the special correspondent of the *Times*, then engaged in investigating the facts connected with the dispute. "Here (wrote he) is an extract from the resolutions of the Masters' Association, deliberately adopted, which puts in the clearest possible light some most important considerations. It makes manifest that they do not understand their true position, as employers of labour, and it proves that what they condemn in their operatives they do not hesitate to put in practice against them. They, like their hands, confound the price of piecework with the rate of wages; they consider themselves entitled to fix beforehand, and by combination, what shall be the state of the labour market at some future indefinite time. They even go so far in absurdity as to reserve power to the committee to make recommendations in particular cases when the mills again open. Can they accuse the operatives of dictation and interference after this."

By this time, the operatives' committees, having gained some experience in the conduct of the agitation, had reduced it to a very complete organization. The amount of sympathy and pecuniary relief which now flowed into Preston surprised even themselves. Those who best understood the result of former strikes had confidently predicted that not more than a thousand pounds per week could be brought into Preston, and that only for a limited

period; but by the middle of November the sum of money contributed to the different committees amounted to nearly three times that limit. It is much to the credit of the operatives, that even at that time, when there was everything to inspire them with a confident hope as to the result, they endeavoured to bring about a pacification. Some weeks past they had memorialised the mayor of the town (Peter Catherall, Esq.) to call a public meeting of the operatives and the manufacturers to settle the dispute; but that functionary declined to call such a meeting, because of his opinion that it was not "the proper place at which to discuss the differences between the operatives and their respective employers;" now they memorialised the Home Secretary. This memorial, after stating the circumstances of the dispute according to the operative point of view, proceeded to warn Lord Palmerston of the danger to the public peace if the lock-out were much longer persevered in. In reply his Lordship declined to give any opinion on the immediate subject of dispute; at the same time advising the operatives "to endeavour, if possible, to come to some arrangement with their employers."

On Wednesday, the 16th of November an event occurred which threatened to bring great disgrace upon the operatives' cause. Every Wednesday is a sort of market-day for the spinners and manufacturers of North and East Lancashire, for upon that day they repair to Blackburn, as a central and convenient spot, for the purchase and sale of yarn for weaving. As Blackburn was the stronghold of the operatives (being far ahead of all other towns in the subscription list), and as the ten per cent. was being paid there, the Preston people watched with no small jealousy for any attempt to tamper with the Blackburn employers. By some means or other a report was spread abroad, and soon obtained credence, that the Preston manufacturers were attending the Blackburn market for the purpose of inducing the employers there to close their mills, and thus stop the supplies coming into Preston. Believing this, the Blackburn people became very much excited, and on the Wednesday in question some ill-disposed persons assembled around the Bull Hotel and attacked certain individuals whom they assumed to be Preston manufacturers. The disturbance was however speedily quelled by the opportune arrival of the police (the sooner for the discovery that the persons attacked were not what they supposed them to be), and beyond a few bruises, and the demolition of some windows at the Bull Hotel, nothing serious resulted. In consequence of this *émeute* the associated masters of Preston memorialized the Home Secretary, recounting the circumstances of the attack, and representing the necessity of some steps being taken "for the purpose of preventing such acts of ungoverned violence." In this memorial, the Preston masters complimented their own operatives upon their observance of the peace, and laid the whole blame of the affair upon the Blackburn people.

About this time, the agitation received a little variety from the appearance of female delegates, who travelled about and spoke at the public meetings with all the energy, and perhaps more than the

loquacity of their male coadjutors. The theme upon which these women principally dilated was the obligation of the employers to pay such wages to the men as would enable them to keep their wives in comfort at home, without the necessity of sending them to work at the mills.

On the 21st of November, the police authorities took a very decided step against the locked-out operatives by the issue of a proclamation prohibiting the sale of songs about the streets; which was designated as a pretence for begging, and threatened with the penalties of vagrancy.

It was perhaps an ultimate detriment to the cause of the Preston operatives, though at the time productive of great pecuniary aid, that the Trades' Unions throughout the country joined in the contest, and gave solid proofs that they considered it in the light of a class-battle. The Amalgamated Trades of London took the initiative in the movement, and continued throughout the whole of the struggle to send large sums of money to Preston. At a meeting of London working-men, held in the British Schoolroom, Cowper Street, City Road, the following resolution was passed :—"That this meeting, after witnessing the numerous failures that have been too consequent upon sectional and isolated struggles of the people to maintain a proper scale of wages, and to achieve the emancipation of labour, is of opinion that the time is now arrived *when a united mass movement of the working-classes, based upon a national organization, and guided by one directing body*, can alone assure adequate support to the men now locked out of employment and on strike, and enable working-men, for the future, to free labour from the thraldom of capital." Subsequently, at a meeting held at the Bell Inn, Old Bailey, a committee was organized for this purpose, and a correspondence was opened with all the Trades' Unions throughout the kingdom. The result will be best understood after a reference to the accounts of the Amalgamated Committee, hereafter given.

Pursuant to the resolutions of the 4th of November, the associated masters of Preston held their adjourned meeting on Thursday, the 1st of December, at the Bull Hotel, when the following resolutions were unanimously agreed to :—

"1. That neither the prospects of trade, nor the position taken by the workpeople, enable us to recede from, or to modify, the resolutions of the 4th of November, 1853.

"2. It having been alleged that persons, willing to accept work, do not know where to apply for the same :—Resolved in conformity with the resolution of the 4th of November, 1853, that public notice be given that applications for employment will be received at the mills now closed, every working day, from ten o'clock A.M. till four o'clock P.M. ; and that when a sufficient number of hands to enable us to open our mills shall have applied for work, the committee do forthwith convene a general meeting of the Association.

"3. That this meeting do now adjourn till Thursday, the 22nd instant."

The tenor and spirit of these resolutions caused great disappointment to all who were desirous of seeing this lamentable contest brought to a close. They not only left unamended, but actually reiterated the dangerous principles upon which the resolutions of the 4th of November were founded.

However, in conformity with the resolutions, the following notice was posted about the town :—

"Notice is hereby given, that in conformity with the above resolutions, applications for employment will be received at the mills now closed, on and after Monday, the 5th of December, 1853, from ten o'clock in the forenoon till four o'clock in the afternoon.

"By order of the Association."

The immediate response to this invitation was extremely insignificant, for not more than two hundred applications for work were received during the succeeding week. Indirectly, however, it proved a heavy blow to the cause of the operatives ; for it compelled the committee to take into their pay a vast number of people who had discontinued factory labour for many years, but who now threatened to accept work, unless they were subsidized from the relief funds. During the week succeeding the publication of the above notice, 673 persons were added to the list of those who received relief, and most of these remained burdens upon the funds until nearly the termination of the contest.

Both sides having now settled into an attitude of dogged obstinacy, the winter passed away without the occurrence of any very exciting episodes. The weekly meetings of the operatives were continued, and the pecuniary assistance subscribed for their relief rather increased than abated. Still, there was a considerable amount of misery and distress in the town, felt perhaps more acutely by those who depended upon the operatives for support than by those operatives themselves. Not only was there a great deal of mendicancy in the town, but some unfortunates were driven to the most revolting expedients to obtain food. One family was said to visit a slaughter-house regularly, and fetch the blood for their use, without having either bread or groats to mix with it. A man was discovered picking out the best pieces from some wash provided for pigs. In the midst of all this misery certain members of the Board of Guardians endeavoured to withhold parochial relief from all who could not produce a certificate that they had applied for work at the mills in compliance with the terms offered by the masters. To this, however, some of the more humane among the guardians objected, on the ground that no day had been fixed for the re-opening of the mills, and that it was useless to send people to ask for work, especially as by so doing they forfeited their claim upon the funds of the operatives' union ; and it is satisfactory to be able to add that these better counsels prevailed.

While upon the subject of the Poor-law Guardians, it may not be out of place to mention that the great increase in the number of applicants for relief had attracted the attention of the Poor-law Commissioners, who sent down Mr. Farnall, the inspector for the district,

to lecture the Board of Guardians upon the necessity of providing a test for the able-bodied poor. The test suggested was digging; but the Boards, more experienced in the habits of factory life than Mr. Farnall, refused to expose men who had been accustomed to work in heated rooms to cold labour in the open fields, and in some places neither Mr. Farnall nor his advice was received very respectfully.

At the adjourned meeting of the Masters' Association, held at the Bull Hotel on the 29th of December, the following resolutions were agreed to:—

"That inasmuch as no disposition has been as yet shown by the operatives generally to resume work, this meeting do adjourn to Thursday, the 26th of January, 1854.

"Should it, however, in the meantime be ascertained that many of the operatives are desirous of returning to their work, immediate steps will be taken by the associated masters to open their mills."

It had, hitherto, been observed and had caused much comment and surprise, that the associated masters had preserved an unbroken silence upon all the questions in dispute between themselves and their operatives, and had avoided all reply to arguments directed to those questions, whether urged by the operatives or by independent observers. About this time, however, they saw fit to break this long silence; perhaps conceiving, and not without reason, that it damaged them in the minds of the unbiased, and certainly did not convince the operatives. Some few employers began now to combat the statements of the delegates as to their wages and lists of prices, by letters addressed to the newspapers, and placards posted upon the walls; and at length the Association issued a formal statement, explaining the case from the employers' point of view, and the motives which had led them to adopt the expedient of the lock-out. This document was as follows:—

"The Preston Strike. To the Public. In consequence of the various misrepresentations which have been so unblushingly put forth by men who are the acknowledged leaders of the workpeople in the present struggle with their employers, we feel it to be a duty to ourselves and the public to make a few observations, and to state a few facts in reference thereto; and we offer these observations more especially to the attention of those who have only an imperfect acquaintance with the factory system, as well as to the factory operatives in this and other districts, whose sympathies and aid are solicited on behalf of the hands on strike in this town and neighbourhood, and who are liable to be misled by the *ex parte* statements of those whose interest it is indefinitely to prolong the strife.

We will not condescend to notice the various calumnies which are daily applied to the masters, believing that the great majority of the workpeople have no sympathy with such sentiments, and that the general character of the employers in Preston needs not fear a comparison with those of other districts. Neither do we think it necessary again to enter at large into the origin of the dispute further than to state our belief that the differences which in the first instance

existed, would have been arranged and would not have resulted in a general stoppage of the mills, had it not been for the improper interference of strangers between the masters and their hands.

"It is alleged that the workpeople are 'locked out,' and therefore unable to work, if disposed, and that the masters want 'to starve them into submission;' but it is not stated that the closing of the mills was only resorted to after the hands in several of them had struck work, or had given notice to that effect, although an advance of ten per cent. had been offered to them in August last upon the wages paid in 1852. The causes in which the strike originated were carefully investigated by the committee of the Masters' Association, and it was found that the differences between the demands of the operatives and the offers of their employers were so exceedingly small, that a more important question than that of wages was involved, and that these firms were to be made the victims of an organized combination, whose avowed object was to take the masters in succession, and compel them to accept the terms of the unionists.

"We now come to the question of wages, about which so much has been said with a view of misleading the public. The leaders of this agitation affirm that several reductions of wages have taken place from time to time, but they refer more particularly to that in 1847, and to a promise stated to have been made by the masters to give a corresponding advance when trade revived, as a justification of their demand for an advance of ten per cent. We at once admit that owing to the depressed state of trade in 1847 a general reduction of wages took place in the latter part of that year, or early in 1848. We deny, however, that any such promise was made by the masters generally, although this might have been done by some individual firms. Before proceeding further it is necessary to explain that most of the work done in factories is piecework, and that the prices paid are in all cases regulated by the quality of the raw material, and the state of the machinery. For instance—where the machinery is old, there may be a high rate of piecework and the weekly earnings low; and where the machinery is modern, and embraces all the recent improvements, there may be a lower rate of piecework and the earnings comparatively high, without any extra exertion on the part of the hands.

"Being anxious to ascertain the difference (if any) between the earnings of the various classes of operatives in 1847, before the above-mentioned reduction took place, and those in the summer of 1853, before the ten per cent. was demanded, we find, from the returns furnished us from the wages books of several large and influential firms, that instead of any decrease, there has been an actual increase, varying from five to thirty per cent., after making due allowance for the difference in the hours of labour from sixty-nine to sixty hours per week. We have not thought it necessary to extend these inquiries, not having the slightest doubt that, if the average of all the mills now closed had been taken, the result would have been the same. We take this opportunity of stating, for the information of those persons whose aid and contributions are solicited for the hands,

that in a well-regulated spinning and weaving establishment, the weekly earnings of men employed therein vary from 12*s.* to 35*s.*; women and young persons from 7*s.* 6*d.* to 15*s.*; and children from 4*s.* to 6*s.*, according to the nature of the employment and the diligence and ability of the worker; and that the average of all classes of hands in such an establishment is about 10*s.* each.

"In reference to the statements so frequently made, that the wages paid in Preston are much lower than in other towns, the fact that this town has hitherto been well supplied with good hands sufficiently refutes these assertions, which are put forth without any proof whatever.

"In corroboration of the above, we would refer to the letters of three masters, in the *Preston Chronicle* of the 24th inst., respecting their own cases, and which, we feel assured, could be supported by many others of a similar kind; but these prove that wages are not generally lower here than elsewhere.

"After the continuance of this struggle for upwards of ten weeks, the operatives still persist in their demands, and evince the same indisposition to return to work, although the masters have declared their willingness to receive applications, and as soon as they were sufficiently numerous to enable them to open their mills, immediate steps would be taken to that effect. No applications of any consequence have been made, and the dispute appears as far off a settlement as ever.

(By order of the Committee,)

"JOHN HUMBER, Secretary, *pro tem.*

"PRESTON, *Dec.* 27, 1853."

To this statement the Weavers' Committee replied as follows:—

"PRESTON LOCK-OUT.—TO THE BRITISH PUBLIC.—In consequence of the various misrepresentations which have been so unblushingly put forth by the 'Masters' Association;' we, the Weavers' Association, feel it to be a duty to ourselves and the public to publish the following answers:—

"1st.—In the document issued yesterday by the Masters' Committee, they say, 'that the differences which in the first instance existed would have been arranged, and would not have resulted in a general stoppage of the mills, had it not been for the improper interference of strangers between the masters and their hands.' We beg to say distinctly, that no *strangers* had, either properly or improperly, interfered in the disputes between the masters and their hands, previous to a notice being given for a general stoppage.

"2nd.—We repeat, that we have been 'locked out, in order to starve us into submission,' not because we objected to the advances made upon the price paid in 1852, for the great body of us were perfectly satisfied with the advances given, but because we thought fit to give our own money to support some four mills' hands that had disputes with their employers, the primary cause of our sympathy being, that these workpeople had been denied the opportunity of explaining, or coming to an arrangement with their employers.

It is false and without any foundation to say 'that these firms were to be made the victims of an organized combination, whose avowed object was to take the masters in succession, and compel them to accept the terms of the unionists.' We deny this statement, and challenge them to substantiate it. We, as a body, have never done or said anything to justify such a conclusion.

"3rd.—They say, 'We at once admit that, owing to the depressed state of trade in 1847, a general reduction of wages took place;' but with respect to the promise of restoring it when trade revived, they say, 'We deny, however, that any such promise was made by the masters generally, although this might have been done by some individual firms.' We are prepared to admit that every employer in the town did not make that promise: there were several firms where had the hands, or any portion of them, raised the shadow of an objection to the reduction, or solicited a promise of any description, they would have received summary ejectment; and such a process, in the state of the labour market at the time, would have been next to starvation and death; but the promise given at the firms where the masters allowed them some little 'freedom,' was justly considered applicable to all, and consequently, to those firms where the hands dare not ask, at that time, to be other than 'degraded slaves.'

"4th.—They say, 'Being anxious to ascertain the difference (if any) between the earnings of the various classes of operatives in 1847, *before* the above mentioned reduction took place, and those in the summer of 1853, *before* the 10 per cent. was demanded, we find, from the returns furnished us from the wages book of several large and influential firms, that instead of any decrease, there has been an actual increase, varying from 5 to 30 per cent., after making due allowance for the difference in the hours of labour, from sixty-nine to sixty hours per week.' Gentlemen, if your object had been to furnish statistical data of the benefit and blessings which have resulted from the passing of the Ten Hours' Bill (that bill which you so long and so zealously opposed, and which you so often prophesied would be followed by ruinous and disastrous results—by the bye, we are told at the present time, that if you cannot succeed in reducing our wages ten per cent., it will be followed by disastrous ruin) we could have understood your motive; but because, by our untiring exertions, we have succeeded in doing as much work in sixty hours as we formerly did in sixty-nine hours, you are so ungenerous as to make this a justification for preventing us participating in the general prosperity which has followed; but you say, '*that in a well regulated spinning and weaving establishment*, the average earnings of all classes of hands are about 10*s.* each.' You forget to tell us whose well regulated establishment this is; but if all establishments where the average earnings are less than 10*s.* per week, are badly regulated establishments, we are prepared to prove from your own books, if you will furnish us with the facility, that the great body of establishments are anything but 'well regulated.'

"5th.—We repeat that the wages paid in Preston are less than what are paid in other districts, and this is the secret cause of the determination of the workpeople to improve their condition.

"6th.—We refer the public to thel etters we have sent to the Preston papers, in answer to those which appeared in the *Chronicle* of Saturday last.

"7th.—We beg to say, that in this struggle the masters are the aggressors; we are on the defensive; we were (with the few exceptions referred to) satisfied with the wages given us before the 'Lock-out;' we understand that we must not resume work unless we will submit to a reduction of ten per cent.; we have offered to have the question settled upon reasonable terms, but 'no concession' is the terms of our employers; they have forced us to rely for an existence upon aid from other towns, and now tell us, that we can only resume work upon condition that we will degrade ourselves in the eyes of the world, by accepting a reduction, which must naturally be followed by a reduction in the wages of those who have so generously saved our children from starvation. Are these the only terms of honourable men? will it be the interest of the employers of Preston to see their workpeople both degraded and dishonest?—We think not; but if it be, we tell them that we will suffer much before we will submit to such depravity.

"In conclusion, we again reiterate, that we are prepared at any time to bring this dispute to an honourable and reasonable arrangement.

"By order of the Power-loom Weavers' Committee,

"JAMES WHALLEY, *Sec.*

"Committee Room, Preston, *Dec. 28th*, 1853."

It were needless to recapitulate the true facts of the case, already recorded in these pages, and to point out from them how far both these statements are erroneous.

There can be no doubt that at this time many of the Preston masters were "very hard put to it." Many of them were desirous of getting to work, and there is good reason to believe that some of the lesser capitalists apprehended serious difficulty if some aid were not afforded them by their brother manufacturers throughout the district. On Tuesday, the 27th of December, the manufacturers who attended the Manchester market convened a meeting, for the purpose of taking into consideration the position of the Preston masters. This meeting was attended by employers of labour from Manchester and Salford, Stockport, Bury, Ashton, Staleybridge, Glossop, Hyde, Preston, Darwen, Bacup, Bromley, Colne, Accrington, and other places. It was urged that the contest being fought out in Preston was not for wages, but was a question of mastery, in which they were all equally interested; that the Preston masters were running the risk of bankruptcy for the establishment of a principle which affected the whole class; that that class ought to give them their support; and that as extraneous aid had been thrown into Preston on the side of the operatives, the same description of assistance should be provided to enable the masters to carry on the war: a resolution was consequently passed, "to support the Preston masters in the present

struggle." In furtherance of this, a more extensive meeting was held at the offices of Messrs. Richardson and Whitworth, Corporation Street, Manchester, on the following Monday, when the following resolutions were agreed to.

"1. That this meeting, having taken into consideration the matter now in dispute betwixt the master spinners and manufacturers of Preston and their workpeople, feels that, whilst upon all ordinary occasions it would be highly undesirable to interfere in any local dispute arising out of a matter of discipline, or upon the subject of wages (believing that the unerring principle of supply and demand is the only true and permanent regulator of wages, as it is of all other articles of value), is of opinion that the present struggle in Preston is organized and kept up by paid agents, chiefly strangers in the town, whose interest it is to foment a spirit of insubordination and dictation amongst the workpeople towards their employers, and that by an extensive organization for these objects, these parties are now levying contributions from our workpeople and others, in many cases by threats of violence and by intimidation; and seeing also that it is the avowed intention of these parties, when they shall have gained their object in Preston, to 'subjugate,' as they term it, the manufacturers of other towns in succession, this meeting believes that if this system should be successfully carried out in Preston according to the intentions publicly stated by these parties, it would be a public calamity, utterly subversive of the best interests of both employers and employed, and involve all in one common ruin. It has thus become a question affecting the interests of the whole trade; and consequently this meeting feels it to be the duty of all parties interested to co-operate with and support the master spinners and manufacturers of Preston in resisting this organization, and to tender them compensation for the pecuniary losses they are incurring by the present turn-out of their workpeople.

"2. That this meeting is unanimously of opinion that the most equitable method of rendering pecuniary assistance to the Preston masters is by a contribution from each employer of a per centage upon the total amount of weekly wages paid by him, and it is hereby agreed that a fund shall be forthwith raised upon this basis.

"3. That the treasurer of this fund, together with other gentlemen now present, be a special committee, to act with the committee to be appointed by the Preston masters, in the receipt and apportionment of the fund, from which no payment shall be made except by cheque, to be signed by two members of the committee and the treasurer.

"4. That a call of *five per cent.* upon the total wages of each employer be paid WEEKLY until the strike be ended, and that the same be paid to the Manchester and Liverpool District Banking Company to the credit of the 'Master Spinners' and Manufacturers' Defence Fund,' and that the first payment be made on or before Saturday next."

As the accounts of this defence fund have not been made public, we are unable to state the amount of pecuniary assistance rendered.

It is believed, however, to have amounted to a considerable sum; sufficient at any rate to enable the Preston employers to continue the dispute; and whether it was large or small, it is certain that some of the subscribers to the fund found it an uncomfortable burden long before the termination of the dispute. Messrs. Richardson and Whitworth, the secretaries to this fund, advertised a statement recapitulating the case of the Preston masters, and when their functions ceased, a long report was published, distinguished, we are constrained to say, by the singular inaccuracy of its facts, and the evident unfairness of its deductions.

It was at the time suggested that the Associated Masters, in thus extending assistance to their Preston brethren, were moved by other considerations than the establishment of a principle. They were, in fact, paying money to their rivals to stay out of the market, and there can be no doubt that during this strike business left Preston for other districts which has never returned back to it.

In the beginning of January, the London Society of Arts, actuated by a very laudable desire to do something towards promoting a clearer understanding of the facts, if not a pacification between the parties, issued the following notification :—

"The Council of the Society or the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, having had the recent disputes between the employers and employed in the manufacturing districts under their serious consideration, are of opinion that this Society may be made, in some degree, instrumental in promoting a clear knowledge of the facts and principles involved in the questions at issue, and may offer a neutral ground upon which both parties may fairly and temperately discuss the best modes of either preventing the outbreak of such disastrous quarrels, or terminating them as speedily and satisfactorily as possible to all parties when they arise.

"The Council therefore propose, in the first place, to hold a Conference, to which they will invite the general associations of masters and operatives at Manchester, and the local associations of Manchester, and the local associations of masters and operatives at Preston, to send each a representative. They also propose to invite to the conference an equal number of those who took the most prominent part on either side of the late dispute among the mechanical engineers. It will further be the care of the Council to bring to the conference, without bias on one side or other, as many as possible of those who, without being involved in the labour question as partisans, have studied and mastered its various bearings. The Council propose to regulate the order of the proceedings so that they may have a practical tendency, and a business character, and not degenerate into vague, noisy, or useless declamation. For this purpose, each speaker will be strictly limited to a few minutes on each topic; and, that digression may be readily checked, the whole subject will be defined and divided into distinct propositions, such as the following :—

"1. Combinations.—Are they objectionable, whether set on foot by employers or employed, as a means of influencing the value of labour? Would a law of limited liability in partnerships tend to render such

combinations unnecessary? Do they remove the questions with which they deal from the privacy of ordinary trade management, and place them under public cognizance, and, if so, how may that publicity be most simply and effectually secured? Ought any legislative provision, or other arrangement, to be made by which the right of association, if obviously exercised to the detriment of the community, might be controlled or neutralised?

"2. Strikes and Lock-outs.—Should partial strikes, intended to take the masters of a locality in detail, be met by lock-outs? What other means are likely to be effectual in terminating them?

"3. Wages.—Does payment by piecework alter substantially the nature of the relations which would exist between employer and employed were the latter day or weekly labourers? Can lists of prices for piecework be equitably drawn up so as to meet the varied circumstances of different machinery, different management, different localities, and the constant progress of improvement? Ought manufacturers to bind together their associations within the limits of a minimum scale of prices for piecework? Ought the operative to share beyond the value of his labour in the increased productiveness of improved machinery?

"The Council propose that no resolutions should be adopted except where unanimity prevails. While they venture, for convenience sake, to prescribe the order of the proceedings, they intend to observe a strict neutrality. They have fixed upon Tuesday, the 24th day of January, for holding the conference, which is hereby convened at the Society's House, John Street, Adelphi, punctually at ten A.M."

The conference here proposed was held at the house of the Society of Arts, Lord Robert Grosvenor in the chair, on Monday, the 30th of January; but although attended by a numerous and highly respectable audience, the manufacturers kept aloof. Mr. Ainsworth, formerly the secretary of the Masters' Association, was present, but in his private capacity, and refused to take any part in the proceedings, otherwise than as a listener. Mr. Cowell appeared for the Preston operatives and made a statement, the most important point in which appears to have been his denial of the charge against the unionists that they had intended to take the masters in detail. At the commencement of the conference Mr. Ernest Jones attempted to get up a scene, and on being called to order denounced the meeting "in the name of the working-classes," and left the room. Nothing resulted from the discussion beyond a vote of thanks to the chairman.

Mr. Edward Hollins, of the Royal Sovereign Mill, was not a member of the Masters' Association at the time when, by locking up his mill, he apparently adhered to their policy. Mr. Hollins stood in a very peculiar situation with regard to his operatives; for he was willing to give them the required advance upon all his sorts but one: on that sort (which was his lowest) he resolutely refused to give an advance of 10 per cent., because he had already granted a very considerable advance upon it, and therefore he held it to be unreasonable that an equal percentage should be demanded upon all his sorts. When Mr. Hollins locked up his mill, he did so upon the question of authority,

whether he was to make an independent bargain with his operatives, or be subject to the dictation of a committee of unionists; for he had reason to believe that the persons in his employ would have been willing to come to some arrangement with him had it not been for the interference of the delegates. When he closed his mill, he supposed that the Masters' Association were going to fight the battle upon the same ground; but when he found, from the tenor of the resolutions of the 4th of November, that they were fighting rather for the 10 per cent., he felt that he was standing alone in the matter. At the beginning of 1854, when the condition of his trade rendered it desirable for him to open his mill, he saw that it would be unwise for him to offer himself a sacrifice to a principle which all the other employers had (in his opinion) deserted. Entertaining this idea, he made preparations for the re-opening of his mill, and announced to his former workpeople that he would supply them with work, and make such arrangements as to prices as might be mutually agreed upon. But the leaders of the operatives would not permit this; they would suffer no arrangement to be completed which had not previously been ratified by their consent. Consequently, on the morning of the 9th of January, when Mr. Hollins opened his mill, the Weavers' Committee prohibited the operatives from going into it by a public notice. Mr. Hollins continued to keep his mill running, and to provide work for all who offered themselves; but although the number of these gradually and steadily increased, the quality of the labour was not equal to the requirements of his trade, which were such as to demand the most skilful operatives. For this reason, and finding that a large proportion of his work was either entirely spoiled or greatly depreciated, Mr. Hollins found it necessary to make another endeavour to arrange with his own hands. After some negotiation this was happily effected, on the basis of a mutual concession, the operatives agreeing to accept an advance of about 4 per cent. upon the disputed sort; and on the morning of the 17th of February the operatives who had been employed at the Royal Sovereign Mill previous to the lock-out resumed work with the best possible feeling towards their employer. It was some indication of the spirit which really animated the workpeople at this time, that, before resuming work, they held a meeting, at which it was resolved to treat the operatives who had already accepted Mr. Hollins's offer to provide work (and who had been working as "Knobsticks"*) with friendliness and cordiality. For making this compromise with his hands, Mr. Hollins was greatly blamed by the Associated Masters, who still contended that anything in the nature of a concession was degrading to the employing body; but by unbiased observers his conduct was deservedly cited as an independent and laudable example of wise conciliation. In quoting this case, it should always be remem-

* This word is suggestive. In former strikes those operatives who chose to act independently of the Unions were chastised with the reality of the *Knobstick*. Happily, the name now is all that remains of a very ruffianly branch of Lynch Law.

bered that it was a compromise and not a victory to either party. Of this the operatives themselves seemed to be perfectly aware; for, neither at the time nor afterwards, was there the slightest indication of any boastful or exulting spirit with regard to Mr. Hollins.

On the 24th of January the Spinners' Delegates published a very important document, which stated the prices paid at several of the leading spinning-mills in Preston, and compared them with the prices paid elsewhere. From this lengthy statement the following most prominent examples may be selected.

"Prices paid for Hand-mule Spinning in BOLTON. — *Twist:* Counts, 36's; spindles, 612; 2*s.* 6*d.* per 1000 hanks.

"Prices paid for Hand-mule Spinning at TAYLOR'S Mill, Preston. —*Twist:* Counts, 32's; spindles, 600; 1*s.* 6¾*d.* per 1000 hanks, or 2*s.* 2*d.* per 1000 draws.

"More paid per 1000 hanks in Bolton than in Preston.—11¼*d.*, or about 30 per cent.

"Prices paid for Hand-mule Spinning in BOLTON. — *Twist:* Counts, 36's; spindles, 612; 2*s.* 6*d.* per 1000 hanks.

"Prices paid for Hand-mule Spinning at Mr. AINSWORTH'S, in Preston, the masters' secretary. — *Twist:* Counts, 30's; spindles, 612; 1*s.* 6*d.* per 1000 hanks, or 2*s.* 1½*d.* per 1000 draws.

"More paid per 1000 hanks in Bolton than in Preston.—1*s.*, or about 75 per cent. Bravo! Mr. Secretary.

"Prices paid for self-acting in BLACKBURN.—*Twist:* Counts, 32's; spindles, 694; 3*s.* 9½*d.* per 100lbs. Allowing 6½*d.* per 100lbs. for creeler.

"Prices paid at SEED'S Mill, Preston.—*Twist:* Counts, 32's; spindles, 694; 2*s.* 1*d.* per 100lbs. Creeler paid by master.

"Prices paid more in Blackburn than in Preston.—1*s.* 2*d.* per 100lbs., or about 50 per cent.

"Prices paid for Self-acting Minding in ASHTON. *Weft:* Counts, 36's; spindles, 720; 11½*d.* per thousand hanks.

"Prices paid for Self-acting Minding at CALVERT'S, in Preston. —*Weft:* Counts, 34's; spindles, 774; 7¾*d.* per 1000 hanks.

"More paid in Ashton than in Preston.—3¾*d.* or 50 per cent.

"Well done! thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy lord—Mammon!"

Although the accuracy of this statement was not wholly unimpeachable, but, on the contrary, was in some instances successfully disproved, it created an impression (probably not altogether unfounded) that the prices paid for spinning in Preston were generally lower than those paid at Bolton, Manchester, Stockport, and the other towns quoted in the statement.

In accordance with its previous resolution, the Association of Master Spinners and Manufacturers held their adjourned meeting at the Bull Hotel, on Thursday, the 26th of January, when the following resolution was passed:—

"That this meeting (deeply regretting that although the applications for work since the 29th of December last have been more nume-

rous than at any previous period of the turn-out, still they have not been sufficiently general to enable the masters to resume work) do, at its rising, adjourn to Thursday, the 23rd of February next, with the understanding that, should it be ascertained in the meantime that there is an increased disposition on the part of the operatives to return to their work, immediate steps will be taken by the ASSOCIATED MASTERS to open their mills, and effective measures adopted to protect the operatives against any improper interference or molestation."

The concluding sentence of this resolution bore reference to the very unjustifiable endeavours of the operatives to interfere with the free action of those who were accepting work at Mr. Hollins's mill (the conciliation before referred to not having then been arranged) by mobbing them and picketting the mill. We do not urge it as an excuse, but simply as an explanation of this conduct, that the operatives had executed no bond to preserve the unity of their body, and that consequently they were unable to put in motion any such covert coercive influence as the threat of a suit for £5000.

The effect of the foregoing resolution upon the temper of the operatives and their leaders, may be inferred from the following resolutions passed at the meeting of delegates held at the Temperance Hall on the Sunday immediately following the meeting of the masters :—

" 1st.—That no more deputations from the weavers wait upon the employers of Preston.

" 2nd.—That in consequence of the employers of Preston having agreed to adjourn the opening of their mills until the 23rd instant, this meeting of delegates resolves to carry into effect the two following resolutions, viz. :—

" 3rd.—That in the opinion of the delegates here assembled, emigration is not only one of the safest and surest means of thinning the labour market, but is the best plan that can be adopted to bring this strike to a speedy conclusion, and to prevent a recurrence of strikes in future.

"4th.—That the delegates of the Central Committee pledge themselves, on behalf of the districts they represent, not only to support the Preston operatives, but to raise a fund to emigrate all operatives who are willing to leave a land of oppression for one of freedom."

Whatever may have been the intentions of the masters when they published their resolution adjourning the meeting to the 23rd of February, they very speedily abandoned them ; for on the afternoon of Wednesday, the 8th of February, the town was not a little surprised by the appearance of the following notice, announcing that the mills would be opened on the following morning, and would be kept running in readiness for volunteers :—

" At a special meeting of the Associated Masters, held at the Bull Hotel, in Preston, on Wednesday, the 8th of February, 1854, it was unanimously resolved, that in consequence of the greatly increased disposition shown by the operatives to resume work since the meeting of the Associated Masters on the 26th of January last, and firmly be-

lieving that large numbers have been deterred from openly manifesting a desire to free themselves from their present leaders, and to return to their respective employment, only by fear of ill-treatment, and of the loss of their present means of subsistence; this meeting is of opinion that the time has at length arrived when it is incumbent on the masters, in fulfilment of the pledges repeatedly given by them, to re-open the mills, in the hope of thereby bringing this unfortunate and protracted dispute to an end, and of rescuing the town and neighbourhood from that wide-spread and rapidly increasing distress from which they are now unhappily suffering.

"Public notice, therefore, is hereby given, that the several mills of the Associated Masters will be re-opened, and will be prepared for a resumption of work to-morrow (Thursday) at eight o'clock in the morning, upon the terms and in accordance with the resolution passed on the 4th of November last; and all persons desirous of obtaining employment may depend upon constant work, and are reminded that the masters are pledged and are fully determined to protect them against any improper interference or molestation."

In the first moment of surprise, the operatives held a great open-air meeting, and pledged themselves not to resume work without the 10 per cent.; but, before the conclusion of the following week, the policy of the masters' movement was sufficiently demonstrated by the fact that about 1,500 persons had accepted employment in the different mills. In one very important respect the opening of the mills affected the cause of the operatives; for it compelled the Poor-law Guardians to refuse relief to all persons able to work. The operatives inveighed very bitterly against the Guardians for this; but it was clear that there was no option in the matter: the law was imperative.

Besides Mr. Hollins, whose conciliation with his hands took place this week, two other manufacturers made arrangements with theirs, and it was computed that altogether 2,500 hands had resumed work in Preston since the issue of the resolutions of the 8th of February. The leaders of the operatives were too acute not to see their peril, and accordingly we find them straining every nerve to inflame and support the agitation. Their harangues became more declamatory, and their placards grew wilder in tone. The central committee, meeting in Manchester, addressed the working classes of the United Kingdom, and appealed to them in "the sacred name of Union, to cherish and protect principles for the espousal of which so many victims have suffered fine and imprisonment at the hands of the *ruthless, relentless, rapacious, and tyrant capitalists of this town;* and, lastly, we call on you, in the name of your own wives and children, whom you are pledged before Heaven to protect, to pour in your contributions a little while longer; and, Heaven approving of our just cause, *we will for ever crush that hydra-headed monster, Capital, that has for such a length of time made our homesteads the abode of misery, want,* and all the concomitant evils inseparably connected with such a state of being; for be it remembered that, 'HE WHO KNOWINGLY PERMITS OPPRESSION SHARES THE CRIME.'"

Mr. Michael Gallaher, secretary to the Preston spinners' committee, concludes a very Irish address with asking the operatives whether they are prepared to desert their cause, and himself supplies answer: "LET EVERY WORKING MAN, WOMAN, AND CHILD IN PRESTON EXCLAIM, SO HELP US, GOD, NEVER! NEVER!! NEVER!!! AND MAY GOD PROTECT THE RIGHT."

On Thursday, the 23rd of February, the Masters' Association followed up its new line of policy, by the publication of the following resolution, passed at its adjourned meeting:—

"That the several mills of the Associated Masters having been re-opened in accordance with the resolution adopted at their last meeting, and several of them having had a sufficient number of hands to enable them to commence work, and to get into partial operation; and this meeting, believing that great numbers of the operatives are still prevented resuming work through intimidation and fear of personal violence, pledges itself to continue to afford all the protection in its power to every person engaged at the several mills, and at the same time to resist to the utmost that spirit of dictation and interference on the part of strangers to which the present unhappy differences are mainly attributable.

"That this meeting, at its rising, do adjourn to Thursday, the 23rd of March, 1854."

Finding, however, that the accession of volunteers to the mills was not so speedy as they desired, they now put in motion a scheme for importing operatives into Preston to take the places of those who persisted in refusing compliance with their terms.

The following placard was printed and circulated very widely over England and Ireland:—

"RE-OPENING OF THE MILLS AT PRESTON.

"WANTED a large number of FACTORY OPERATIVES and young persons of both sexes desirous of obtaining employment in factories, with whom permanent engagements will be made on liberal terms.

"The present offers a favourable opportunity for large families desirous of removing to the manufacturing districts.

"Application to be made to the SECRETARY of the MASTERS' ASSOCIATION, PRESTON.

"February 23rd, 1854."

They took into their employ agents, who travelled about the country, especially in Ireland and in the agricultural counties of England, inducing young people to come to Preston and learn the operations of the cotton manufacture. It was charged against these agents at the time that in the performance of their duty they were guilty of deceiving the people whom they so induced; that they exaggerated the average rate of earnings, and concealed the proportionate expense of living, and that, when such a statement could be safely hazarded, they even assured the recruits that the disputes at Preston had been amicably concluded, and that only a few extra hands were wanted to supply the vacancies in the mills. It is quite certain that many of these immigrants, after their arrival in Preston, complained bitterly

of having been deceived, and expressed considerable surprise on ascertaining the real position of affairs there. In opposition to these tactics of the Masters' Association the delegates were not idle. On the Monday after the issue of the foregoing placard, about sixty persons were brought by train from Manchester, under the care of one of the agents of the Masters' Association; but before they could be got away from the station, and in their progress through the streets of the town, most of them were induced to leave their conductors, and accompany the emissaries of the unionists, by whom they were led in triumph to the "Farmer's Arms," where they were treated to meat and drink, and then sent back again to Manchester. In order to prevent a repetition of this, the Association hired a house closely approximating to the railway station, which they fitted up and called "THE FACTORY IMMIGRANTS' HOME"—which title was paintedupon a sign-board and conspicuously fastened over the door of the house. In its immediate results, the experiment was not very successful; for by far the larger proportion of the immigrants were utterly useless to the masters. The correspondent of a London journal, writing from personal observation, gave the following picture of the immigrants :—

"The Irish, who were the first to arrive, presented a picture of wretchedness and squalor which it would be difficult, if desirable, to realize. It is not easy to imagine how such a collection of filthy unfortunates could be got together, and their state may be imagined when it is known that forty of them are so bad that the masters can make no use of them. An empty house opposite the railway station has been converted into a sort of barracks for the reception of the immigrants, and a policeman who entered this place on the morning after the arrival of the Irish, left it immediately nauseated to sickness. Some of the recruits from the north of England are more satisfactory, and some families from Buckinghamshire seem clean, healthy, and respectable. On Monday some amusement was created by the arrival of a batch of female volunteers, rather gaily attired, and with veils; they seemed very much amused at the adventure, and it is thought that they will not stick to weaving very long. Many stories are afloat about the conduct of the immigrants, especially the Irish. Some of those who fell to the lot of an associated master are said to have celebrated their advent by procuring a little whiskey, upon the strength of which they thrashed an overlooker; others said that they needn't expect them to get up at six o'clock in the morning; in another factory, the new comers are said to have run away in a fright directly the machinery was put in motion. At one mill, this morning, nine of the Irish turned out, on the ground that they had not been furnished with sufficient food, and certainly their condition seemed most deplorable. . . . The expense to the masters must be enormous."

Next week, the same correspondent wrote :—

"On Monday morning, thirty-five low Irish were brought from Manchester. I happened to be at the station when their effects

were being removed from the train, and I saw bedding so full of vermin that the porters had to scald the trucks, and even the pavement of the station with boiling water. The railway officials are greatly to be blamed for permitting such filthy goods to be transported. Some of the Associated Masters meet the trains by which immigrants are expected, attended by a great posse of police, firemen, and specials. The polite manner with which these otherwise haughty gentlemen hand the females out of the carriages, inquiring after their bundles, and even dandling the babies, affords considerable amusement to the bystanders."

The importation of this mass of filth and pauperism into the town became a grave question with some of the middle-class inhabitants, who gave vent to their feelings on the point in the following petition to Parliament :—

"*To the Honourable the Commons of Great Britain and Ireland in Parliament assembled.*

"The petition of the undersigned Inhabitant Householders and Ratepayers of the Borough and Township of Preston, in the County of Lancaster,

"Humbly Showeth,—That your petitioners have noticed the introduction into your Honourable House of a bill to abolish in England and Wales the compulsory removal of the poor, on the ground of settlement, and to make provision for the more equitable distribution of the charging of relief in unions. That under ordinary circumstances your petitioners would have hailed the introduction of such a measure with great satisfaction, but under the present peculiar situation of the town, your petitioners believe that unless the borough and township of Preston is specially exempted from the provisions of the said bill, that it will bring ruin upon a large portion of the respectable ratepayers. That the present extraordinary condition of the town arises from the importation of a large number of unskilled pauper labourers, brought into the town and located at the instance of a combination, styling itself the Associated Masters of Preston. That the respective members of the before-named combination, acting under the style or denomination of the 'Associated Masters of Preston,' binds each of its members by a bond to obey all orders passed by a majority of its members, failing in which the respective members render themselves liable to a penalty of £5000 each. That the unskilled paupers now being introduced into the town of Preston by the before-named combination, will, under the proposed measure for the abolition of compulsory removals, ultimately become irremovable paupers chargeable upon the poor's funds, and thereby increase the poor's rates of the township of Preston to a most alarming extent, and bring to want and beggary a large body of those ratepayers who are now independent. That your petitioners therefore pray your Honourable House to insert a clause into the said measure specially exempting from its operations the township of Preston, and thus avert the impending ruin, which, without such

exemption, will fall upon the town by the flood of pauper labourers now being imported into it from the distant counties of England, in addition to a large number of paupers from Ireland. And your petitioners will ever pray."

expected from the north; the firm to which they were consigned

On Thursday evening, the 2nd of March, some immigrants being thought it necessary to provide vehicles and an array of police to escort them from the railway station. This unusual demonstration attracted a crowd of idlers (principally lads and lasses), and the result was, that when the immigrants arrived, some mud and stones were discharged at the vehicles. The windows of an omnibus were smashed, and the counting-house windows of the firm suffered some damage. To this very unwise and illegal proceeding the arrival of a few police put a speedy end. Next morning, some Irish immigrants were expected to arrive at the railway station, and on this occasion the Mayor, accompanied by the Town-Clerk and other municipal dignitaries, proceeded with a *posse comitatus* of the police and fire-brigade to receive them. A large crowd was attracted; but the concurrent testimony of all independent observers, and even of the police themselves, certainly goes to prove that the attitude of that crowd was pacific. It had simply been attracted by curiosity, and was composed for the most part, indeed, of operatives, but with a considerable admixture of respectable townspeople. Under the impulse of what motives, therefore, the Mayor was induced to read the Riot Act, it seems impossible to discover; but we only re-echo an opinion at that time very loudly and generally expressed, that the reading of the Riot Act was a most dangerous and unjustifiable proceeding, and one which put in great peril the peace of the town.

Immediately after this, and after the military at Fulwood Barracks had been put under arms, the following proclamation was issued, to justify what had taken place in the eyes of the public :—

"Borough of Preston, in the County of Lancashire.

"Whereas public meetings have been holden in the said borough, at which inflammatory speeches have been made, and language uttered, having a tendency to cause a breach of the peace, and the commission of other offences: And whereas a serious riot has already taken place in the said borough: And whereas large numbers of persons continue to assemble and gather together, to the great terror of the peaceably disposed inhabitants of this borough: And whereas a proclamation under the Riot Act has this day been read within the said borough; Notice is hereby given, that all such meetings and assemblages are unlawful, and are hereby prohibited; and all persons are warned not to assemble and congregate together in the public streets or places within the said borough, as they will answer the contrary at their peril.

"By order of the Mayor and Magistrates of the Borough of Preston,

"Thos. Dodd,

"Clerk to the Magistrates of the said Borough.

"March 3rd, 1854."

Now there was but one statement in this document which was not almost, if not entirely, without foundation. In the first place, so far from the utterance of language "having a tendency to cause a breach of the peace, and the commission of other offences," the watchwords of the delegates had up to this time been PEACE—LAW—AND ORDER. As has been before recorded, the Preston manufacturers, only a few weeks previously, in memorialising Lord Palmerston to protect them from the Blackburn mob, bore testimony to the peaceful and orderly demeanour of the Preston operatives. Again; what ground was there for saying that "a serious riot" had taken place? Surely the smashing of the omnibus windows on the previous evening could not be so considered, and that it could not was sufficiently proved by the acquittal of one of the youths charged with the offence at the assize, and the lenient sentence of one month's imprisonment upon another. It is to be feared, however, that the animus of these measures is to be discovered in the prohibition of those meetings within the borough which had hitherto exercised so powerful an influence in fanning the flame of agitation.

The committee of the operatives, anxious to avoid giving any excuse for more extreme proceedings against them, were most strenuous in their endeavours to pacify the now excited feelings of the people.

The Spinners' committee issued a proclamation to the effect that—

"The time has at length arrived when every man, woman, and child is particularly requested to do their duty. Our struggle has attained its four-and-twentieth week, and it is most desirable that all legal means possible should be tried to bring about, or anything tending thereto, a settlement of this unparalleled dispute. THIS IS, THEREFORE, TO GIVE NOTICE, that any person or persons violating the peace of the town in any way whatever, either by surrounding the entrances of the various mills working, or calling the parties therein employed certain names, or assembling in crowds in the streets, or in any other way violating the peace, such person or persons shall in no ways whatever receive our sympathy and support, or be the least countenanced for such illegal proceedings."

The Weavers issued a similar document, adjuring the people, "for your own sakes, and for the sake of your cause, do not find the policeman a job, do not assemble together at the corners of streets or near any of the mills in the town; go quietly on your ways."

After the prohibition of public meetings within the borough, meetings were held at certain convenient spots either immediately outside the borough, or at some position so central that the attendance from several towns would swell the concourse to the dimensions of a "monster meeting." Some of these meetings were held on Sunday, and the following description by an eyewitness of two held under Hoghton Tower (nearly equidistant between Preston and Blackburn) may not be deemed uninteresting:—

"Saturday's meeting was attended by five bands of music, and when the Blackburn labourers (freed from their labours by two o'clock, as is the custom on Saturday afternoons) filed along the high road into

the field of meeting, and met their Preston brethren for the first time since the commencement of this memorable struggle, the shout of welcome and congratulation might have been heard miles away. Divesting the incident of all poetry, and viewing it simply as the meeting of several thousands of the poor to hear some very indifferent speaking in the open air, it was no less grand and touching. For those thousands were bound together by a community of purpose—a community which has successfully resisted the extremes of privation during six months. One-half of that multitude has given up its all, upon the faith of support which has been freely rendered out of the slender earnings of the other half, and all for the accomplishment of an object. If the orators were not skilled and elegant, at least they were in earnest, and, right or wrong, were inspired by a profound conviction of the honesty and justice of their cause. The deportment of the multitude was remarkably quiet and orderly, and, after the first shout of welcome, nothing like clamour was to be heard. At Sunday's meeting this discreet self-control was even more conspicuous. As the afternoon was very warm and sunny, I drove to the place of meeting in an open vehicle. All the way from Preston to Hoghton the road was thronged with multitudes as densely as that to Epsom on the Derby day, but all so quiet and peaceful, as if they were going to church. From Blackburn, and through Blackburn, from the remotest corners of East Lancashire, yet vaster multitudes were pressing towards Hoghton in an opposite direction. When I arrived at the place of meeting, it was thronged by an immense and still increasing crowd. Soon after this a train of thirty-two carriages, alive with people, came rolling in from Preston, drawn by two locomotives; when this had discharged its living freight, a similar convoy arrived from East Lancashire; and as these new crowds poured down from the station, a murmur of wonder seemed to thrill through the multitude, asking when their complement would be full."

About this time, a transaction was made public which afforded a curious instance of the coercion exercised by the masters upon each other. It appeared that a member of the Association had come to some private arrangement with his hands, who returned to work with the consent of the general body on strike. This aroused suspicion, and the report soon spread abroad that he had made concessions. Some said that he had agreed to give a bonus of a shilling per warp upon a stock of old warps, and that the shilling was, in effect, ten per cent. and that the stock of old warps was likely to last for some time. However that may have been, the Association demanded an explanation from Mr. S——, and published the following placard.

"It being currently circulated that Mr. J. S—— has made arrangements with his hands differing from those offered at the other mills of the Associated Masters, the committee beg to state that, in reference to such reports, the following note has been received from him.

"By Order of the
"COMMITTEE OF THE ASSOCIATED MASTERS.

"—— Mills, Preston,
" 13*th March*, 1854.

"The hands, on resuming work at these mills, are to be paid our March list of prices.

"John S——."

This called forth a rejoinder from some of Mr. S——'s hands—

"It having been stated (and very erroneously) by the Associated Masters, in a bill posted on the walls this morning, that Mr. J. S——'s hands had resumed work at March prices, we request that the Associated Masters will not trouble themselves respecting the prices or terms on which we have commenced work, for we have pleasure in stating that these terms are mutually satisfactory to both the employer and employed.

" Signed on behalf of the hands—

Ellen S——.
Mary A. S——.
Mary J——.
Agnes W——.
John N——."

But next week Mr. S——'s mill was once more deserted, and it was generally understood that this was caused by a threat of legal proceedings to recover the £5000 bond.

And now, when the effects of the masters' policy were beginning to tell against the operatives, when the spirit which had hitherto animated them was beginning to fail, and the subscription lists (sinews of the war) were exhibiting signs of decay, the Masters' Association took a course which had the immediate effect of rousing all the dormant spirit of the operatives, and fanning the smouldering embers of public sympathy in their favour into a flame: they arrested the leading delegates on a charge of conspiracy. During Saturday, the 18th of March, and all the following Monday, it was known throughout the town that Mr. Ascroft, the Town-Clerk, and professional adviser to the Masters' Association, was closeted with the Mayor and magistrates, and a rumour oozed out that it was in contemplation to take the delegates into custody upon some charge or other. On Monday morning, an open-air meeting of the operatives was announced to be held in a field behind the Bridge Inn, Penworthan Bridge (without the borough); some two thousand of the unemployed repaired thither, and were harangued by Cowell, who informed them that the lessee of the field had been compelled to refuse them a standing upon his grounds. He then referred to the possibility of his arrest, and impressed upon the people the paramount importance of keeping the peace in spite of every provocation. Between nine and ten o'clock that evening, five of the delegates were arrested (Cowell, Grimshaw, Waddington, Gallaher, Laing, and Gardner); next morning, Wood and Blocklehurst voluntarily surrendered, and in the course of the day Parkinson, Dolphin, and Gregson, who were also included in the warrants, were forthcoming. Fearing an outbreak when the opera-

tives came to hear this startling intelligence on the Monday morning, the Weavers' committee printed and posted during the night the following proclamation :—

"WHEREAS our leaders have been apprehended by the magistrates, upon a charge not yet known, we adjure you most earnestly that, as you value the cause for which you have so long and so nobly fought, you will KEEP THE PEACE, and not suffer the excitement of the moment to betray you into the slightest offence against the law. To create a DISTURBANCE is all that is wanted, for the soldiers are prepared to shoot you down in the streets. There is a law in England greater and wiser than that of the Preston magistrates, and we willingly entrust ourselves and our rights to that law.

"By Order of the

"POWER-LOOM WEAVERS' COMMITTEE."

In addition to this, they adopted several precautionary measures. They sent special bellmen round the town early in the morning to announce the fact of the arrest, and to exhort the people to be peaceful ; and they appointed several members of their body to mix with the crowd and aid the police in the preservation of order. Whether it was in consequence of these measures, or of the strong restraint which the prudence of the people imposed upon their feelings, it would be difficult to determine ; but it is a fact that, although for the three days occupied by the examination of the delegates before the magistrates, the greatest excitement of feeling prevailed, although immense crowds of operatives surrounded the Town-Hall during the progress of the examination; although the passage of the defendant delegates through the streets was hailed like a triumph; yet during all that time, and amid all that excitement, not the most trivial event that could by the most partial ingenuity be converted into a disturbance occurred. Those crowds stood round the Town-Hall silent, earnest, and impassive; when their favourite leaders appeared each evening, after their liberation upon bail, they gave one enthusiastic cheer; and five minutes after these leaders had addressed them in a few temperate words, urging them to go peacefully to their homes, the space which they had occupied was utterly deserted.

The charge upon which these men were arraigned was (to quote the words of the warrant), for having molested and obstructed certain persons hired by cotton spinners to work in their trade and business, and for having forced and endeavoured to force the said persons so hired to depart from their said hiring. The case against seven of the defendants rested mainly upon the incident already related ; when a number of immigrants brought from Manchester were induced to leave their conductors and eventually return to Manchester. The case against Parkinson, Dolphin, and Waddington rested upon their having met a consignment of one hundred and forty-one Irish at Fleetwood, and having succeeded in persuading one hundred and one out of that number to return to Belfast. So far as the facts went, there appeared to be little doubt about them; the reported speeches of the defendants themselves, the items of expenditure

entered in the published balance-sheets, and the concurrent testimony of witnesses, did not leave room for a doubt about the fact that the delegates had "persuaded" certain persons hired to depart from their hiring. Evidence of "force" there was none, and the gravamen of the charge evidently lay in the assumption that the kind of *persuasion* used by the delegates had exceeded the bounds permitted by the law. One of the legal advisers retained for the defence (Mr. Noble) quoted from the case of *The Queen* v. *Selsby and others* the following *dictum* of Lord Cranworth, then Mr. Baron Rolfe:

"Workmen may meet and say, 'We will not work for such and such a sum, and if parties think to employ us on low wages, we agree we will not work for them, and we agree to form a fund and support one another until we get them to come to proper terms.' It is doubtless lawful for people to agree among themselves not to work except upon certain terms; that being so, I am not aware of any illegality in their peaceably trying to persuade others to adopt the same view. If it is lawful for half a dozen people to agree together and say, 'We will not work unless Messrs. Jones and Potts (the prosecutors in that case) raise our wages,' so it is perfectly reasonable to say to a third man, 'You had better not do that too,' if they do not use threats to deter him from doing it. My opinion is, that if there were no other object than to persuade people that it was their interest not to work except for certain wages, and not to work under certain regulations, complied with in a peaceable way, it was not illegal."

Even from the evidence for the prosecution it was shown that the defendants had consistently and earnestly recommended obedience to the law, and altogether there seems to have been no ground for doubting that if the defendants had really offended against the law in the nature and degree of their *persuasion*, they had done so ignorantly.

After an examination lasting three days, the magistrates decided upon sending the defendants to be tried at the Liverpool Assizes then sitting, and the legal conductor of the prosecution made the most strenuous endeavours to bring the case before a jury on Monday, the 28th of March,—eight days after the arrest of the defendants. On the application, however, of the counsel for the defendants, the trial was postponed until the autumn assizes, when (the contest being over) the proceedings were abandoned by the prosecutors.

One peculiarity about these prosecutions was the secrecy with which the attack was prepared, and the evident haste to bring the defendants to trial at the assizes then sitting. Although the prosecutors had nearly a month to prepare their evidence, and the arrest of the defendants was postponed until within five days of the latest moment at which an indictment could be sent to Liverpool, and although the defendants had only eight days to rebut an elaborate case, and to prepare all the machinery of their defence, a strenuous effort was made to bring the case on for trial at once and without delay. So confident did they feel that this could be effected, that the

briefs for the prosecution were prepared, and fees paid to counsel; and, it was said, this futile proceeding cost the Masters' Association nearly £700. Happily, however, for the defendants, they had to deal with a high-minded judge; for Mr. Justice Cresswell declared that he thought the public would hold the trial to have been unfair if proceeded with then.

There can be no doubt that public feeling at the time sided very warmly with the defendant delegates. With English hatred against oppression, many of the middle classes of Preston, who had before been inclined to condemn these men, now came forward and subscribed money to pay for their defence. A defence fund was organized and rapidly swelled to a considerable amount. In the parlour of one inn £15 was contributed in the course of a single evening. A common labourer walked into Preston and laid down a sovereign before the treasurer of the fund. When the defendants went to Liverpool they were received with great enthusiasm by the working-classes of that town, and when the result of their application for the postponement of the trial was known, the congratulations and more solid tributes which poured in upon them seemed endless; while so great was the impulse given to the pecuniary contributions, that the balance-sheet for the week after the arrest showed an advance of £700 over that of the previous week, and a greater total sum than had been subscribed for any one week with the single exception of the Christmas week.

While these events were proceeding the Masters' Association held its adjourned meeting, and passed thefollowing resolutions:—

"That this meeting regrets that the continued unwillingness of many of the operatives to resume work has forced upon the masters the necessity of importing a large number of hands from other districts; that it approves of the course hitherto so successfully adopted, and is determined to persevere in the same until the mills are fully at work; that it pledges itself to afford protection and constant employment to all persons engaged.

"2.—That this meeting deems it unnecessary to call the Associated Masters together, as heretofore, from month to month; and, therefore, at its rising, do adjourn to this day three months, namely, Thursday, the 22nd June next."

It is to be feared that there was more of pique than of judgment in the prolonged adjournment for three months. The operatives eplied to it by adjourning for six months.

Meantime, the immigration continued to be carried on, but not prosperously; the people sent in became daily more conspicuous for filth and worthlessness; many of them arrived in a state of drunkenness, and not a few sold the clothes which they received on their arrival. Out of 127 persons imported during the week ending April 1st, twenty-seven were returned as utterly useless; during the same week twenty more of the immigrants were sent back by train, of whom two were lunatics. About this time, an accident occurred at one

of the mills, which proved the folly (not to say cruelty) of putting unskilled hands to superintend complicated machinery. An immigrant from Buckinghamshire was entrusted with the management of a self-acting mule, and one of his legs was torn off by the mechanism.

On the evening of Wednesday, the 29th of March, a final endeavour was made by the townspeople of Preston to bring the dispute to a close by means of a compromise. A meeting was convened at the Theatre, at which a committee was appointed, for the purpose of operating upon the parties by mediation. This was called the MEDIATION COMMITTEE, and besides the members of the town and the vicar, several resident gentlemen were named; in some cases, however, without the previous consent of the parties. How far this body (or rather those few among them who acted) succeeded in gaining the attention of the masters may be inferred from the following published correspondence:—

REPORT FORWARDED BY W. CORLESS, ESQ., TO T. MILLER, ESQ.

"The Mediation Committee, which was nominated at the public meeting held in the Theatre on the 29th of last March, met for the first time on Tuesday evening, the 4th of April. It will be proper here to remark, that two or three persons who were nominated at the meeting declined to act as members of the committee.

"At its first meeting the committee resolved that proposals should be obtained from the operatives as to the terms on which they would resume work; and that the Rev. J. O. Parr, the vicar (who officiated as chairman of the committee), should endeavour to ascertain the views of the employers in respect to the proffered mediation.

"The second meeting of the committee was held on Tuesday evening, the 11th of April, when the report of the vicar and the proposals of the operatives were received. The Operative Spinners proposed to accept an average rate of wages, high and low, paid in the principal manufacturing districts of Lancashire. The Weavers were willing to abide by any one of the four following conditions:—1st. They would resume work at the prices that were paid when the mills were closed. 2nd. They would resume work at the prices now offered by the employers, provided that within a certain specified and reasonable period, say a fortnight, the employers would give them the same wages they were receiving when the mills were shut up. 3rd. They would, like the Operative Spinners, accept an average rate of wages, high and low, paid in the principal manufacturing districts of Lancashire. 4th. They would agree to arbitration, and would pledge themselves that in the event of the arbitrators deciding in favour of the prices at present offered by the employers, they would immediately return to work.

"The vicar, on behalf of the employers, intimated that 'from inquiries I have made, I am convinced of the inutility of any attempt at mediation on the factory question.'"

ANSWER OF T. MILLER, ESQ.

"W. CORLESS, ESQ. WINCKLEY SQUARE, *April* 15, 1854.

"DEAR SIR,—The note sent by you and Mr. Shaw, along with the report, will be laid before the committee of the Associated Masters, at their next meeting on Monday morning.

"I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"T. MILLER."

REPLY OF THE ASSOCIATED MASTERS' COMMITTEE.

"PRESTON, 17*th April*, 1854.

"GENTLEMEN,—I am directed by the committee of the Associated Masters to say, that they have had a letter placed before them signed by Messrs. Corless and G. Shaw, enclosing a report from a Mediation Committee, appointed at the Theatre on the 29th ultimo. The committee believe that the gentlemen who have undertaken this task are actuated by the most disinterested motives, and a sincere desire to effect the object for which they were appointed.

"The only matter now in dispute between the masters and the operatives is the amount of wages to be paid. It is simply the offer of certain wages by one party, and the refusal of them by the other.

"This same difference might, and no doubt daily does, exist between master and servant in all other trades, as well as in domestic circles.

"Rates of wages cannot be settled by mediation, but must be left to the free operation of supply and demand.

"The committee cannot therefore recommend the Associated Masters to accede to any mediation in such a case, as it would be the acknowledgment of a principle most dangerous and mischievous in its tendency—a principle alike subversive of the rights of the working man in the disposal of his labour, and of the rights of the master in the employment of his capital.

"The committee, entertaining these views, respectfully decline, on the part of the Associated Masters, the proposed mediation.

"I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

"JAS. A. EWAN, *Secretary.*

"MESSRS. W. CORLESS and G. SHAW, *Hon. Secretaries to a Mediation Committee*, 326, North Road, Preston.

REPLY OF THE MEDIATION COMMITTEE.

"PRESTON, *April* 19, 1854.

"To MR. J. A. EWAN, *Secretray to the Masters' Association.*

"SIR,—We are requested by the Mediation Committee to acknowledge the receipt of your note, in which you courteously state the determination of the committee of the Associated Masters to decline any services which it might be in the power of the Mediation Committee to give. They deeply regret this determination, especially so, as in their opinion the reasons you allege on behalf of the committee of the Associated Masters will not bear the test of any very strict or profound investigation.

"The Mediation Committee, in accepting offices imposed upon them by the unanimous consent of a large assemblage of their fellow-towns-

men, have had no intention of allowing themselves to be drawn into any discussion concerning disputed points in political economy. In reference, however, to your remarks about supply and demand they cannot forbear expressing the opinion that the state of the town of Preston is a striking exemplification of the fallacy of the doctrine you have so unconditionally enunciated. Labour here is in great demand, the supply is small, and yet the wages offered are considerably less than such as were paid some six or seven months ago. There are evidently other elements, not perhaps as yet well defined or scientifically determined, that enter into the true solution of this, question.

"You state that to admit of mediation, in such a case as this would be the admission of a principle dangerous and mischievous in its tendency. Such a supposition appears to the Mediation Committee to be based upon an exaggerated notion of the necessity of defending and enforcing abstract individual rights. Now, abstract personal rights, if rigidly enforced, tend not to the consolidation, but to the dissolution of the bonds of society. Society, in short, is made up of compromises. Moreover, there is a legal maxim, to the effect that persons shall so use their property as not to injure the property of others. Whether in law the maxim be sound or the reverse, it evidently is so in equity and common sense. Now the skill, industry, and capital of classes unconnected with this dispute are materially damaged and depreciated by it; and they, in the opinion of the Mediation Committee, have a perfect right to use all legitimate means in defence of their property—even to the extent of applying to Parliament for powers to do what our chivalrous allies the French are, under similar circumstances, in the habit of doing, namely, to make the settlement of this dispute compulsory. The Mediation Committee are sure that the members of the committee of the Masters' Association will, upon calm consideration, coincide in the principles now propounded, inasmuch as to hold the contrary would be equivalent to maintaining that persons may, when they choose, appropriate to themselves all the advantages which the institution of society originates and secures, and repudiate the obligations of that institution when it suits their convenience to do so.

"We are, Sir, yours truly,

"W. CORLESS,
"G. SHAW, } *Honorary Secretaries.*"

While affairs were in this position, and the public at large was loudly reprobating the masters for their steady refusal to entertain any proposition for a compromise, accident did for the Association what the Association had never been able to do for itself—it gave a fatal blow to the cause of the operatives. The gloomy prospects of trade, aggravated by the Russian war, had at length induced the Stockport masters to take off the conceded ten per cent., and the effect of the measure was immediate. The Stockport operatives, proud of the prestige of their former victory, were too exasperated at the reduction to take further heed of the Preston contest, and either ignorant or

careless of the effect of their proceedings upon that dispute, they determined to strike for a restoration of the advance. It was in vain that the Preston delegates attempted to remonstrate, and pointed out to the Stockport people that a divided battle would involve a defeat; the Stockport operatives would not listen, and even threatened to pull the Preston operatives from the cart if they dared to advise submission. Next week there was a large deficit in the funds sent to Preston, and the weavers had to borrow £500. During the following week the small and unimportant body of the Throstle-Spinners gave in, and in bidding farewell to the agitation, the Throstle committee thus expressed itself:—

"We regret to say that this, the thirty-first report, is the last we shall issue. Henceforth the throstle-hands retire from the struggle to obtain for factory labour its just reward. We cannot point out in the limits of this address the causes and reasons why there has been left to us no alternative. Suffice it to say, that in thus retiring, we feel that our defeated claims are as just as they were on the first day we appealed to our friends and the public. Those upon whom we have principally depended have deemed it right that we should withdraw, in order to strengthen other contending branches. We have done so. We thank all friends for past kindness, and venture to hope the victory denied to the throstle-hands may be won by those branches who are still contending for freedom and justice to factory labour."

The expedient of a loan was again resorted to, to prop up the falling funds of the unionists, and the Amalgamated Committee raised £400. In apportioning their funds among the various committees, the Amalgamated Committee now deemed it expedient to exclude the card-room hands, for reasons which they thus explained:—

"While upon the subject of the card-room hands, we may inform the trades and the public that they and the throstle-spinners were in receipt of nearly all our funds during the last month; they were not well supported by their fellows in other towns, and the consequence was, that latterly a great number of them returned to their work at the mills. We, therefore, in conjunction with the committees of card-room hands and throstle-spinners, deemed it wise and judicious to make a fresh disposition of the funds entrusted to us, and concentrate as much of our force as possible upon the weavers and spinners, the principal contending parties, and the success of whose cause must carry a universal victory, and be for the good of ALL."

To this decision the card-room hands demurred; but, as will be seen by reference to the accounts of the Amalgamated Committee (hereafter given), the card-room hands had received by far the largest share of the funds in the disposal of that committee, and therefore they could have little cause for complaint. The practical effect of this was, however, to drive the card-room hands into submission, and they accordingly withdrew from the contest.

It now became evident to everybody that the termination of the contest was imminent. The spirit of the battle was broken, and the rapid decadence in the supplies of money plainly indicated that the

contributing districts despaired of success. At the Sunday meeting of the delegates, held on the 30th of April, at which meetings it had previously been customary to make public delivery of the monies brought in, it was evident that something was wrong, and soon after the meeting had opened, the delegates for Padiham moved an adjournment, in order that the delegates might have a private consultation. At the private meeting it was resolved that the weavers should surrender, and on the following morning it was announced to a public meeting of all the operatives of Preston that funds were not forthcoming in sufficient plenty to warrant a continuance of the struggle. Mr. Cowell, pronouncing a sort of elegy over the ten per cent. agitation, defended the conduct of himself and colleagues in the following manner :—

"Though it may be said (said he) that we, on the present occasion, have suffered a defeat, let me tell you, my respected friends, that had it not been for this agitation, which we are now bringing to a close, I feel perfectly satisfied that the operatives of Preston, Blackburn, Stockport, Manchester, and every other manufacturing town in the kingdom, would at this time have been working at a reduction of ten per cent. I believe we have prevented a reduction taking place for the next ten years, and that, if ever the time should come when another reduction is contemplated, it will never come under the denomination of a ten per cent. That cry has so often resounded in the ears of the manufacturers of Preston, that they will for ever be disgusted when they hear the name of 'ten per cent.' mentioned. While we now advise you to return to your employment, rest assured that whenever a reaction takes place in the commercial affairs of this country, the telling note shall again be sounded in Preston, 'Ten per cent, and no surrender.' But you, the working bees of Preston, of Blackburn, and of other towns and districts, must be prepared for the emergency, and whenever the demand is made, if we have a good fund at our back, it is my decided conviction that the employers will give the advance rather than risk another turn-out. I have a word of advice to give to the masters of Preston. When two contending armies meet, and one has proved successful, I would ask the employers of Preston to reflect whether it would be right for the victorious army to pursue the enemy after they have grounded their arms, and ride roughshod over them? I hope the employers will take this advice. Now that we have withdrawn from the field, I hope and trust they will be willing to open their gates, and let you resume your work. Cheer up, lads and lasses. My heart is as warm in the cause as it was the first day I sounded my voice for the ten per cent." In conclusion, the speaker urged his hearers, when they got to work, to contribute 1*d.* each per week, in order that they might raise a fund which would enable them at some future time to gain the object in struggling for which they had now been defeated.

This address was received with the marked approbation and sympathy of the multitude.

For a fortnight after this abandonment of the struggle on the part

of the weavers, an attempt was made by the spinners to carry it on upon their own responsibility and the strength of their own resources. This, however, was clearly impracticable. Although the spinners were a compact body, had funds to fall back upon, and were indispensable to the activity of the mills, it became obvious that 17,000 operatives could not be kept in a state of idleness by seven or eight hundred men, and that unless the spinners speedily gave way, the employers would take measures to supply their places from elsewhere. The spinners' committee made an endeavour to obtain special terms from the Masters' Association, and applied for a conference ; but their advances were sternly and haughtily repelled, and they were told that if they were wishful for employment they must "seek for any information at the respective mills." At last, a number of spinners were brought over from Glasgow, and on Monday, the 15th of May, the whole body of the Preston spinners applied for work at the different mills, and the strike was practically ended.

Thus came to an abrupt, though not unexpected termination, the Preston labour-battle of 1853-4, after an obstinate resistence of nearly seven months ; a contest unprecedented in history, and which, if the lessons of experience be not without effect, will never again be repeated.

THE BALANCE SHEETS.

These documents were issued weekly by the various Committees, who collected and distributed the funds subscribed for the relief of the unemployed. There are seven long series of them issued by the committees of weavers, spinners, card-room hands, throstle-spinners, power-loom overlookers, non-member mill warpers, and tape machine sizers, and a short series issued by the cloth lookers and warehousemen. It will be seen by the following tables that they account for the expenditure of sums, amounting in the aggregate to £105,165 12*s.* 9*d.*; and an endeavour has been made in framing these tables, to show, in a concise and intelligible manner, whence that money came, and what was its destination. Owing to the very inartificial, and, in some cases, inaccurate manner, in which the accounts were prepared, it has not been possible to balance them with the nice exactness attainable in commercial balance-sheets prepared by scientific accountants ; but considering the magnitude of the sums dealt with, the inexperience of the Committees in the management of such sums, and the typographical errors which it was scarcely possible to avoid in the issue of such sheets, at such short intervals, it becomes rather a matter of wonder that the errors are so few and trivial, than of accusation against the framers of those accounts.

The integrity of these balance-sheets has been so often called in question, and so many and such grave doubts have been expressed upon all sides as to the honesty of those who undertook the administration of the funds, that a few observations upon these points will not be misplaced as they occur to us after a careful and dispassionate examination of the accounts. In the first place, we think that it may

be taken for granted, that all sums of money (however small) contributed to the funds were duly acknowledged in the balance-sheets. If they had not been, discovery must have been immediate and fatal. To assure ourselves of this, we need but to remember that many thousands of copies of these balance-sheets were distributed through the contributing districts; that they were posted upon the walls of every town, and lay upon the table of every alehouse, and found their way into every work-room and shed throughout the Cotton Districts; that they were the principal sources through which the delegates communicated to the operatives their reports upon the progress of the agitation and inflamed them into renewed endeavours and increased contributions. That every contributor would eagerly scan those sheets for the acknowledgment of his own subscription was certain, and failing to find it there, he would naturally demand an explanation before sending any more money to the funds. Those who were unable to read would get others to search the sheet for them, and those who visited the Cotton District during the progress of the agitation must have been familiar with the spectacle of a knot of factory operatives eagerly surrounding some one who read over to them the items in the balance-sheets of the week.

Another question, and as to which it is more difficult to arrive at a conclusion, is, whether the committees distributed in relief all the sums which they set forth in the balance-sheets. It has been urged that if these were dishonest men nothing would have been easier than to charge for the relief of ten thousand persons when nine thousand only were actually relieved, and it is certain that such general items as "*Given to* 2,800 *distressed children*," and "*relieved poor family*," are of very frequent occurrence in the items of expenditure, and are open to grave suspicion; but on the other hand, it should be known that the accounts were very carefully examined and very jealously audited by those delegates from the active districts, who brought the money to Preston, and who were interested, above all people in the world, in seeing that the funds were honestly administered. The books of the committees were at all times open to the inspection not only of the unionists, but of all who doubted the authenticity of the accounts, and the name of every person who received relief from the funds of the Union was entered in the book of his committee, and might at any time have been checked. It is, of course, impossible to prove anything with respect to this point; but we incline to the opinion that the sums charged as relief were really paid and rightly so charged.

The last point upon which these accounts are open to attack is whether the disbursements are honestly set out? Whether the money spent in the expenses of the agitation was really devoted to the purposes alleged in the accounts?

In answering this question, it should be observed that there are incident to every agitation expenses which are necessary, indeed, to be incurred, but which would not look very well if plainly set out in the accounts—such as are usually classed under the comprehensive item "*Sundries*." That description of service significantly called

secret, a little treating, perhaps too a little bribery, are seldom dispensed with in the conduct of any agitation, whether the object be reform, or the repeal of the Corn Laws, or the obtaining ten per cent. It always has been and always will be so, and it is therefore sheer prudery to carp at such expenses if kept within reasonable bounds and confessed in the orthodox manner. Now the delegates (being neither more nor less than common agitators) were no more able to dispense with these weapons than older and more respectable politicians, but they have not confessed the fact in the orthodox way; they have no constantly recurring item of "Sundries, £100;" but they have endeavoured to conceal the secret service money by lumping it up with other and more legitimate expenses. Thus it is that we sometimes find that the items of "postage and stationery, are made to account for some hundreds of pounds, and that we nevertheless find "postage stamps" and "one ream of paper" as distinct items. In the accounts of the Amalgamated Committee, the item "*To sending parcels, balance-sheets, and handbills to various places*," absorbs no less a sum than £143 11*s.* 4*d.* within twenty-one weeks; and this same committee resorted to a still more reprehensible method of concealing the actual amount of its expenses, as will be seen upon referring to its accounts. But all this proves not so much that the committee were dishonest as that they were unskilful and unwise; and slow as we should be to screen any act of peculation which admitted of unquestionable proof, it does not appear that the proportion between the sums dealt with and the current expenses of the agitation is such as to demand any special remark.

From the accounts hereafter set out, it appears that the sum actually dealt with amounted to £105,523, while the total expenses of the agitation did not exceed £11,818 (about 11¼ per cent. upon the principal); and when we take into consideration the nature of this agitation, the manner in which that vast sum of money was collected, almost by pennies and sixpences from loom to loom, and from cottage to cottage; when we think of the expenses of printing these thousands of balance-sheets and the innumerable placards and broadsides which were issued during the struggle; when we remember the travelling expenses, wages of collectors, rent of rooms, and the committees other legitimate items of necessary expense, we think that this is not an excessive proportion. If it be asked whether it is not probable that certain sums were misappropriated to support the delegates in a more luxurious state of living than they had been accustomed to enjoy when in regular work? there can be little or no doubt about it During the agitation many stories were set afloat to illustrate the free manner in which these men were living, and it is likely that some of these were founded upon fact; but let us ask those who collect such anecdotes to the prejudice of the operatives and their cause whether it was to be expected that an agitation of this sort could be carried on without something of this occurring; whether rude and uneducated men finding themselves at the head of a great and popular movement, put suddenly into a course of life involving great excite-

ment, frequent public speaking, and considerable personal fatigue, could be expected to live as soberly as Cato, and as inflexibly honestly as Aristides? Let not this be misconstrued, let it not for one moment be supposed that we are defending riot and excess, or the cruel waste of funds provided for the famishing poor; it is simply urged that these evils were, to a certain extent, natural and unavoidable, that they occurred with the full cognizance of those who alone have any right to complain of them, and that their extent was not greater than might have been expected by all who knew anything about the course of similar movements. To substantiate a charge of flagrant dishonesty against the delegates, something more definite must be urged than the vague charge of living well; it should be shown that they conspired to subtract sums of money from the funds for their own private benefit and that they laid those sums by to enrich them when the struggle should be over. This cannot be done; and the very numbers of those who were concerned in the administration of the funds is the best assurance that no such peculation took place. To subtract any important sum from the funds would certainly have required the connivance of a great many men, every one of whom would have required his share, and it is contrary to all human experience to believe that such a robbery would have been committed without a disclosure being made by some dissatisfied accomplice. Yet, although many vague and general charges have been made against the committees, not one single case has been proved or attempted to be proved against them, and the only cases in which it is absolutely known that sums of money have been subtracted from the funds were those which they themselves discovered, and the perpetrators of which were reprobated and pursued in the most energetic manner. And this brings us to another point to be noticed in their favour, namely, whether it is likely that the delegates would have made any stir against their defaulting brethren if they themselves were open to the like charge? It appears to us that prudence, if not shame, would have kept them silent, and that they would have hesitated to prefer a charge which might so easily have been turned round upon themselves.

It must be concluded, therefore, that these balance-sheets are in the main as correct and as trustworthy as any accounts kept by unskilled men might be expected to be, perhaps more so; that they set forth truthfully all the moneys subscribed to the funds of the Union; that they account for those moneys fairly; and that, although in some cases they conceal the real nature of the expenses, those expenses were natural and necessary, and do not exceed in the aggregate a fair proportion of the sums administered.

As has been before stated, the balance-sheets supplied a very important channel of communication between the operatives and their leaders; they were in fact, the journals of the strike. A leading article, or address, from the committee to the class which it represented, generally speaking headed the sheet, and not unfrequently some song or piece of poetry, sometimes extracted from the writings of Burns, or Thom, the Inverary weaver, or sometimes the production of some

native genius amongst themselves, preceded the dry detail of figures. Even these last were enlivened by little outbursts of feeling crying shame upon some laggard, or praise upon some munificent subscriber. But these parentheses were not always innocent, seeing that they might sometimes be construed into threats; reference being frequently made to one *Punch*, and also to *Mrs. Punch*, who were to pay the defaulters a visit and work upon them ills which were anything but obscurely hinted at :—

"*If squinting Jack of Goodairs does not pay up in future, Punch will stand on his corns.*"

"*If those piecers at Dawson's new mill do not pay better, young Punch (old Punch's urchin) will come and break their ends.*"

"*If those three or four spinners do not pay their subscriptions, Punch will bring his iron clogs.*"

Whether the *iron clogs* were or were not brought, it is certain that towards the close of the agitation these indecent passages altogether disappeared from the sheets. Sometimes the threats took a more humorous form, but were doubtless quite as formidable to the objects of them; as for example :—

"*If that black sheep Bob, at Brookfield Mill, does not keep his tongue still, Punch says he will come and curl his hair before he goes to court Jenny Lind, that fine loom weaver at Summer's Mill.*"

"*If that niger in Uncle Tom's Cabin does not pay up, Punch says he will tell what he saw him do one night.*"

"*If that man at Baxter's Mill who borrowed a shilling from the barber, don't pay to the Preston lock-outs, next week, Punch will tell his wife about it.*"

"*I say, Master Kershaw, how is it that you do not support your poor brothers in Preston? Suppose yourself married to that young lady who lives not* 100 *miles from Philip Ogden's, and be placed in their situation, how would you like it? Mr. Punch is determined that if you don't lend a helping hand to Preston, he will say something about that bottle you was drinking out of three times a day, and he will tell her the contents of that bottle, and also the purpose that it was intended for; so pay up, and let us have no more of your sneaking ambition.*"

Occasionally these parenthetic appeals took a sarcastic turn; as :—

"*If William Townson would spend less money in drinking, carding, dog and cock fighting, Punch thinks he might pay something to the Preston lock-outs.*"

"*If that young spark, Ben D., that works at Baxter's Mill, does not pay to his trade, Punch will tell about him eating that rhubarb pudding that was boiled in a dirty night cap.*"

"*If Roger does not pay, Punch will tell about her robbing the donkey of its breakfast to stuff her bustle with.*"

Occasionally, too, the remonstrances took a poetical form :

MILLS IN THE HYDES.

Within these walls the lasses fair
  Refuse to contribute their share;
Careless of duty, blind to fame,
  For shame, ye lasses, O, for shame.

Come, pay up, lasses, think what's right,
  Defend your trade with all your might,
For if you don't the world will blame,
  And cry, ye lasses, O, for shame!

Let's hope in future all will pay,
  And Preston folks may heartily say,
That by your aid they have obtained,
  The greatest victory ever gained.

THE POWER-LOOM WEAVERS, WINDERS, WARPERS, TWISTERS, AND BEAMERS' COMMITTEE.

This Committee issued its first balance-sheet in the beginning of September, and continued its labours until the end of May; during which time thirty-eight reports appeared. It originally distributed its funds not only among the Preston weavers, but also among those at Great Harwood who were then on strike; the fourth and subsequent reports, however, were confined to the Preston accounts. The total sum at the disposal of this committee was £64,200 6*s.* 0¾*d.*, and a district expenditure of £3,640 is also disclosed by the balance-sheets; out of this, £57,690 14*s.* 2*d.* were distributed in relief among the weavers, &c., and a further sum of £3,072 2*s.* 0½*d.* was transferred to other funds distributed in miscellaneous relief. As set forth in the reports, the disbursements and expenses of the delegates and committees is scarcely 5 per cent. upon the total net income, and this includes the expenses of the Propagandist Committee, a branch committee of five members "for agitating the country." The amount of relief varied considerably during the progress of the struggle, commencing at 5*s.* and 6*s.* for the weavers, and 3*s.* for the helpers; afterwards sinking to 4*s.* and 2*s.*, then rising to 5*s.* 6*d.*, and finally sinking to 2*s.* 6*d.* and 1*s.* The greatest number of persons relieved in any one week was 10,121, which occurred in the week ending 24th December, 1853, about which time many persons were admitted to participate in the funds of the Union who had long ceased working at the mills, through fear of their accepting the terms then offered by the Masters' Association.

The series of balance-sheets issued by the Weavers' Committee is thirty-nine in number, and they form altogether a very extensive and complicated set of accounts. The concluding balance-sheets disclose the fact that the close of the struggle left the Executive Committee in debt to the amount of £1,006 10*s.*; partly for money borrowed, and partly for printing bills, &c.

Summary.

	£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
Net Income as per Balance-Sheets	64,199	13	10¾	Distributed in relief	57,690	14	2
Error in accounts.....	0	12	2	Disbursements	2,096	19	5½
				Expenses of Committee, &c.	1,102	18	1½
				Transferred and miscellaneous relief	3,072	2	0½
				Emigrating and removing	199	4	3
				Balance in hand as per last account.....	38	18	0¼
	64,200	6	0¾		64,200	6	0¾

The balance-sheets also disclose district expenditure to the amount of £3,640.

THE HAND-MULE SPINNERS, AND SELF-ACTING MINDERS' COMMITTEE.

It has been before mentioned that the Spinners' Union has been in existence ever since the great strike of 1836. At the commencement of the late struggle they therefore found themselves in the

possession of a considerable reserve fund, from which they drew in time of need, and out of which they were enabled to afford assistance by way of loan to the weavers. The committee of spinners issued thirty-three balance-sheets, extending from the 1st of October to the 13th of May, and during that time expended £19,839 8*s.* 1½*d.* As in the case of the weavers, the sums charged as *Disbursements* and the expenses of delegates and committees, do not amount to 5 per cent. upon the principal. At the conclusion of the struggle, the spinners had drawn upon their reserve fund to the extent of £693 1*s.* 7½*d.*, and money was due to them from the weavers. At the commencement of the struggle 8*s.* per week was paid to the spinners, 4*s.* 6*d.* to the piecers, and 2*s.* 6*d.* to the creelers; this was shortly reduced to 7*s.*, 3*s.* 6*d.*, and 2*s.*, which rate was kept up to the last. The greatest number of hands relieved in any one week was 3,151, which occurred in the week ending 25th February; the fluctuation in the number of hands relieved arose from the extension of relief to a greater number of piecers, creelers, and bobbiners; the number of skilled spinners and minders decreased constantly by emigration from 847, the greatest number, to 785, the least.

Summary.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Net income, as per Balance, sheets	19,082	19	9
Taken from Local Fund and Northern District Fund	693	1	7½
	£19,776	1	4½

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Relief	18,208	11	2
Disbursements	475	15	8
Expenses of Delegates	378	1	3
Transferred to other funds, &c.	607	18	1
Emigrating and removing	109	15	8½
Error in accounts	0	19	11
	£19,776	1	4½

District expenses, as disclosed by the Balance-sheets, £63 6*s.* 9*d.*

BLOWING-ROOM AND CARD-ROOM HANDS' COMMITTEE.

The series of balance-sheets issued by this committee is thirty-four in number, and sets forth the expenditure of £9,904 16*s.* Nearly one-half of this sum was the proportion of public moneys allotted to this Committee; for to this body, on account of its poverty, and the inability of its members in other districts to afford much assistance, was allotted the greatest share of the public moneys. The disbursements and expenses of the Committee, as set forth by the sheets, amount to about 7½ per cent. upon the principal. The greatest number of hands relieved was 2,301, which occurred in the week ending the 18th of February. The amount of relief given was very meagre; 2*s.* 6*d.* for the highest, and to 1*s.* for the lowest class of hands at the beginning of the strike; advancing to 3*s.* 6*d.* and 4*s.* 6*d.*, (which latter sum it never exceeded), and finally sinking to 1*s.* before the fear of starvation drove the card-room hands to submission.

Summary.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Net income as per Balance-sheets	9,789	16	0	Disbursements	388	18	8
				Expenses of Committee and Delegates	869	12	10½
				Relief	8,969	4	8
				Balance in hand as per last sheet	10	5	8½
				Error in accounts	0	14	11
	£9,789	16	0		£9,789	16	0

District expenditure, £165.

THE THROSTLE-SPINNERS, WINDERS, AND REELERS' COMMITTEE.

The throstle-spinners were neither a very numerous nor a very important body; for the numbers relieved never exceeded 510 in any one week, and the average was 434. This committee issued thirty reports, and spent £2,476 15*s.* 9*d.*, of which sum considerably more than half was the share of public moneys paid to their account. The amount of relief varied from 3*s.* 6*d.* and 2*s.* per week, to 4*s.* and 2*s.* 3*d.* The disbursements and expenses of the delegates were about 15½ per cent. upon the principal. This body, like the former, submitted through want of funds, and the withdrawal of the support afforded to them by the Amalgamated Committee.

Summary.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Net income as per Balance-sheets	2,419	2	4½	Relief	2,048	6	4
Balance due to Treasurer, as per last sheet	0	7	1	Disbursements	197	1	11
Error in accounts, over-charged	2	8	9½	Expenses of Delegates, &c.	176	10	0
	£2,421	18	8		£2,421	18	8

District expenditure, £54 17*s.* 6*d.*

THE POWER-LOOM OVERLOOKERS' COMMITTEE.

This was a small, but highly important body, inasmuch as its members exercised a great influence, both directly and indirectly, over the general body of hands. This arose partly from their official position, and partly from the fact that most of them were the heads of large families of operatives. Throughout the whole of the struggle the power-loom overlookers were most anxious to relieve themselves of the responsibility of exercising their influence in favour of either side, and constantly urged a friendly termination to the dispute; with this politic view they constantly spoke of them-

selves as thrown out of work "by a dispute over which they had no control." The power-loom overlookers issued thirty-four reports, accounting for the expenditure of £19,624 12*s.* 9*d.* The disbursements and expenses of the committee amounted to a little over ten per cent. upon the principal. The amount of relief varied from 5*s.* to 6*s.*, rising to 7*s.* 6*d.* and 8*s.* 6*d.*, and even to 10*s.*; at the close of the dispute it sank to 6*s.* 6*d.*, and then to 3*s.* 6*d.* This committee received no assistance from the Amalgamated Committee.

Summary.

	£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
Net Income	1,964	12	9	Spent in relief	1,760	16	9
				Disbursements	84	15	6
				Expenses of Committee and Delegates	118	14	8
				Balance in hand, as per last balance-sheet	0	5	10
	£1,964	12	9		£1,964	12	9

District expenditure, £115.

GENERAL BALANCE-SHEET OF THE TAPE MACHINE SIZERS.

The Tape Machine Sizers appear to have organized a fund previous to the strike (*Vide the Fifth Report*); but, if that were so, they only drew from it on one occasion. From the following statement it appears that the total income of this body coming into Preston amounted to £844 2*s.* 7*d.*, the accounts also show that a further sum of £10 5*s.* 9½*d.* was expended by the various district committees in expenses incidental to the agitation. In the ninth week a strike at Bury threw many of the Tape Machine Sizers there out of work, afterwards many Stockport and a few Royton hands were placed in the same predicament, and all these were relieved by the Preston committee; the number of strangers so relieved is, however, distinguished from the Preston hands in the proper column, by being separately stated. The amount of relief varied from 14*s.* to 6*s.* per week; and in some cases, where the men had obtained other work, sufficient relief only was given to bring their income to a level with the rest.

Summary.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Relief	790	7	2
Ditto	28	5	7½
* Committees, &c.	25	9	9½
	£844	2	7

CLOTHWORKERS' BOOK-KEEPERS' AND WAREHOUSEMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

This body only issued three balance sheets, the contents of which may be briefly set forth as follows:—

* This sum includes some of the expenses incurred by the district committees, which are stated in the balance-sheets as though they formed part of the general expenditure.

Summary.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Net income.....	192	8	11½	Disbursements.....	18	17	10
				Expenses	17	3	5½
				Relief	146	9	6
				Balance	9	13	2
	£192	8	11½		£192	8	11½

Expenses of the Blackburn Branch, £10 12*s.* 11*d.*; making a total of £202 16*s.* 10½*d.* spent by this committee.

The position in which this small but respectable body of men found themselves was very analogous to that of the power-loom overlookers ; they were unwilling sufferers from the strike. Many of the warehousemen and clothworkers were supported by their employers, and made themselves useful in keeping the mills in order during the inactivity of the machinery ; but some few were destitute of any resource, and these received income from the Association. By their resolutions passed in February, 1854, this Association declared that its objects and intentions were:—

"1. Never on any occasion, either by word or action, to encourage strikes: which, in themselves, we consider to be an evil, and injurious to the wellbeing, not only of trade, but of society at large.

"2. In all cases of strikes to stand on perfectly neutral ground, as we have hitherto done.

"3. The position which the members of this Society hold, must necessarily have told them from time to time, that inasmuch as their supply of work depends greatly on the other branches of operatives, insomuch they are obliged to stop work when they (the operatives) strike: this therefore being the case, and seeing that in times like the present we cannot rely with safety on any resources but our own for support, the third object of this society is to provide for its members when they are unwillingly thrown out of employment. In a word, the recognised objects and principles of our Society are, the diffusion of social and intellectual intercourse amongst all its members, and to provide them with that pecuniary aid and assistance which they stand in need of in times like the present, and which we, the Preston Brethren, have (during the last six months) so much wanted."

There is perhaps more sound sense in these three resolutions than in any resolutions passed by either party to the dispute during the whole of its continuance.

THE AMALGAMATED COMMITTEE.

This committee was formed for the purpose of collecting the monies subscribed by the public and general trades. It issued twenty-seven reports, and received altogether £11,932 6*s.* 3*d.*

The accounts of the Amalgamated Committee are highly interesting, as showing the extent to which general trades, and the trades, unions throughout the country joined in the contest. For the purpose of illustrating this, an analysis of the monies received by the committee is subjoined, from which it will be seen that two-thirds of these monies were sent by trades' unions. It should also be recollected that as the Amalgamated Committee was not organized until the latter end of the month of November, the subscriptions of trades' unions would really be much larger than they appear in the accounts of that Committee.

The funds received by the Amalgamated Committee were by them divided among the weavers, spinners, card-room hands, and throstle-spinners, in proportion as they needed help :—the card-room hands, as the most destitute, receiving the largest share of assistance. Towards the end of April, the Amalgamated Committee, seeing the hopeless condition of the struggle so far as the card-room hands and throstle-spinners were concerned, and deeming it better to devote their whole strength to the support of the weavers and spinners, divided all their funds between the latter bodies.

In comparing the balance-sheets of the Amalgamated Committee with those of the committees among whom they divided their funds, a marked discrepancy is observable between the sums charged by the former and those acknowleged by the latter. These deficiencies stand as follows :—

Charged by the Amalgamated Committee.	£	*s.*	*d.*	*Acknowledged by the Committees.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Weavers	2,524	7	9	.....	2,297	4	8½
Spinners	2,010	12	2	.....	1,607	5	4
Card-room hands	4,446	7	7½	.....	4,418	18	1
Throstles	1,549	9	8	.....	1,515	4	9
	10,530	17	2½				
	9,838	7	5½				
	£692	9	9		£9,838	7	5½.

The explanation of this is, that the Amalgamated Committee, conscious of the fact that their expenses were greater in proportion than those of any other committee (as upon them principally fell the weight of secret-service money, &c.), and intimidated by the attacks made upon them in some of the public journals, endeavoured, with the connivance of the respective committees, to conceal the real amount of their expenditure by charging larger sums as paid to the committees than actually *were* paid to them. This disingenuous means of stating the accounts is excused upon the ground that, as the money was paid *on account* of the different committees, they had a perfect right to represent it as paid *to* them ; but it would have been far better to brave criticism upon the extent of their expenses than to have opened so wide a loophole for remark as to the inaccuracy of the accounts. By adding the above stated deficiency to the expenses admitted by the Amalgamated Committee, we find that the

real amount of the expenses was £1,896 2*s.* 4½*d.*, or about 15½ per cent. upon the amount which passed through their hands.

Analysis of the Income received by the Amalgamated Committee.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Amalgamated Societies of Engineers—Central and Branch*	1,120	12	8
Manchester office of Amalgamated Society	164	0	9
Block Printers of Surrey* and United Block Printers of Scotland	60	0	0
Boiler Makers of Bristol, Leeds, Manchester, Nottingham, H. M. Dockyard Portsmouth, Portsea, Stoke-upon-Trent, Swindon, and Woolwich	60	8	8
Boiler Makers and Iron Shipbuilders, the Executive Council of Hulme and Manchester	202	12	1
Bricklayers of Bristol, Heywood, Hull, London,* Preston, Sheffield, Wolverhampton	181	10	7
Brushmakers of Bristol and Preston, and the United Society of England	65	5	8
Cabinet Makers of Birmingham, Bury, Bridgenorth, Bristol, Halifax, Kidderminster, Lancaster, Leeds, London,* Manchester, Preston, Rochdale, Wolverhampton, York	186	0	2
Carpenters and Joiners of Bath, Bristol, Cardiff, Derby, Gloucester, Liverpool, London,* Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, North London, Preston, Salford, Sheffield, Westminster, and Wolverhampton	288	14	1½
Cart Wheelwrights of London*	10	0	0
Chairmakers and Carvers of London	20	0	0
Coachmakers of Ashford in Kent, Bedford, Bolton, Bristol, Carlisle, Chester, Cork, Coventry, Derby, Exeter, *Friendly Society (Broad Street, Golden Square, London), Grantham, Leicester, Manchester, Newark, Nottingham, Peterborough, Preston, Sheffield, York, United Society of, Wolverhampton	194	7	11½
Compositors' Society, London*	20	0	0
Coopers of Bristol, Liverpool, London*, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne	144	14	11
Corkcutters of London and Glasgow	23	0	0
Crate Makers in Burslem Potteries	54	0	0
Engineers of the Preston North Union Locomotive department	28	15	0½
Engineers of Ashford, Bristol, Ipswich, London, and Portsmouth	18	5	6
Felt Hat Makers, Manchester	14	0	0
Finger Warpers, Manchester	10	0	0
Flaggers and Slaters of Preston	11	11	6
French Polishers, London*	11	0	0
Forgers—saw, scythe, fender and knife blade forgers of Sheffield	58	0	0
Gold Beaters and Gilders of London* and Manchester	25	18	1
Glass Cutters of Birmingham, London, Manchester, Stourbridge, and York	57	0	1
Glass Makers of Dudley, Holyrood, Manchester, and York	35	6	8
Grinders of Sheffield, scythe and file	207	1	1
Hatters of Bristol, Carlisle, Edinburgh, London,* Oldham and Stockport	89	19	5

* Those London trades against which asterisks are placed contributed more money than is set against them in the foregoing analysis, which money forms part of the £1,700 10*s.* 8*d.* received from the Metropolitan Trades' Committee, Bell Inn, Old Bailey. At the outset of the agitation many of the London trades sent their contributions direct to Preston, but afterwards contributed through the medium of the Trades' Committee. As the expenses of that committee were deducted from its aggregate receipts, and a balance usually remained in hand, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to apportion the money received from the committee among the different contributors.

	£	s.	d.
Hearth-rug Weavers of London	63	0	0
Hydraulic Packers of Manchester	30	0	0
Iron-wire Drawers of Barnsley and Birmingham	14	1	0
Millwrights of Bolton, Manchester, Oldham, and Middlesborough	84	10	8
Moulders of Barnsley, Bradford, Bridgewater, Brighton, Bristol, Chester, Cleckheaton, Dartford, Derby, Edinburgh, Hanley, Ipswich, Manchester, Middlesborough, Newcastle, Nottingham, Oldham, Preston, Renishaw, Stafford, Staleybridge, St. Helens, Stockport, Stockton, Moulders of Scotland, Tipton, Wakefield, Warrington, Worcester, York	306	10	6½
Machine Engravers, Manchester	14	11	9
Painters, Plumbers, and Plasterers of Bradford, Bristol, Manchester, Hammersmith, Preston, Marylebone *, and at Edkins and Sons, Bristol	60	16	5
Paper-makers' Association, Maidstone, Kent	50	0	0
Plumbers and Brassfinishers, London *	10	0	0
Packing-case Manufacturers, Manchester	10	0	0
Potters of Middlesborough, Sunderland, and South Wales	17	18	8
Ribbon Weavers of Congleton and Derby	69	17	2
Rope-makers of London and Liverpool	60	15	0
Reynolds's Newspaper Office *	208	18	9
Riggers of Liverpool	15	0	0
Sailwrights of Liverpool	20	0	0
Shipwrights of Blythe, Bristol, Chester, Dundee, Liverpool, Middlesborough, Loaftwitch, Monkwearmouth, Newcastle, North Shields, Northwitch, Preston, Stockton, Sunderland, the Wear	333	12	7
Shipjoiners of Liverpool and Sunderland	46	15	7
Shipsmiths of London and Liverpool	25	0	0
Shoemakers of Barnsley, Bedford, Bristol, Cambridge, Chorley, Cheltenham, Glasgow, Gnassal, Gloucester, Greenwich, Kendal, Liverpool, London,* Hammersmith, Middlesborough, Kensington, Northampton, St. Edmunds, Stone, Stafford	161	12	8
Skein Silk Dyers of London	37	6	5
Silk Smallware Weavers of Manchester and Glasgow	17	0	0
Seamen's United Friendly Association, Hartlepool	25	0	0
Smiths and Blacksmiths of Ashton-under-Lyne, Accrington, Barnsley, Bedford, Bolton, Brailes, Bradford, Bristol, Cambridge, Exeter, Gateshead, Gloucester, Huddersfield, Leeds, Liverpool, Nottingham, Oldham, Preston, Reading, Rochdale, Smethwick, Sheffield, and Worcester	88	18	0
Steam-Engine Makers of Bolton, Greenwich, Hull, London, Manchester, Nottingham, Preston, Rochdale, St. Helens, Sheffield, and West London Branch	79	10	7½
Stonemasons of Edinburgh, London*, Preston, and the New Houses of Parliament	177	17	11½
Tailors of Ayr, Barnsley, Bradford, Bristol, Carlisle, Chatham, Chester, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Gloucester, Grantham, Johnstone near Paisley, Liverpool, London, Hanley, Middlesborough, Middlesex, Newchurch, Newcastle, Preston, Rochdale, Rossendale, Stafford, Staleybridge, Todmorden, York, Tailors' Society (Little Windmill Street, London)	157	8	6½
Tin-plate Workers of Belfast, Bradford, Glasgow, Liverpool, London*, Preston, and Wolverhampton	116	6	0½
Tobacconists of Manchester and London	26	8	1
Type-founders of Dublin, Edinburgh, London, and Sheffield	90	8	0
Typographers of Sheffield and Liverpool	11	5	0
Metropolitan Trades' Committee, Bell Inn, Old Bailey, per Wm. Allen, Secretary	1,700	10	8
Staffordshire Potteries	107	12	12½
Hanley Potteries	119	12	4½

		£	s.	d.
Tanstall Potteries		56	17	2½
Iron Trades of Bedford and Bury		14	14	8
Newcastle Collieries		15	2	11
Mass Movement, Central Committee in Manchester and Branches		157	14	0
Bradford Trades and Public		3	19	6
Bristol	ditto	135	10	2½
Bilstone	ditto	2	0	0
Aberdeen	ditto	2	16	7
Bath	ditto	2	8	6
Bedford	ditto	4	6	0
Birmingham	ditto	3	19	7
Belfast	ditto	8	9	0
Carlisle	ditto	11	7	6
Chester	ditto	39	11	10
Crewe	ditto	2	9	6
Derby	ditto	12	11	7
Hyde	ditto	5	0	0
Holmfrith	ditto	2	9	0
Leeds	ditto	28	15	5
Liverpool	ditto	52	19	8
Manchester	ditto	188	3	11½
Nottingham	ditto	64	8	9½
Northampton	ditto	7	10	0
Oldham	ditto	4	10	6
Ratcliff	ditto	4	0	0
Rotherham	ditto	37	9	6
Sheffield	ditto	123	6	7½
Stafford	ditto	8	8	8
Staleybridge	ditto	32	0	10
Miscellaneous public subscriptions of small amount, collected in the Preston District		1,202	15	3½
Ditto, Walton District		44	15	1
Ditto, Bamber Bridge District		38	3	2½
Ditto, Garstang District		18	18	3
Ditto, Moon's Mill District		23	4	6
Ditto, Farrington District		4	7	2
Swindon Works, Co-operative Trades at		75	6	0
Amalgamated Trades of Wolverhampton		37	5	10
Ashford in Kent, Railway Station and Public		30	15	6½
Leeds Railway Foundry		21	9	10
Brighton Railway Foundry		67	19	1½
Midland Railway, Leeds and Bradford		25	19	0
Stoke, Birkenhead, and Manchester Railway Stations		15	11	10
Executive Committee of Labour Parliament		15	0	0
Bricklayers' Arms Society, King Street, London		13	10	0
Friendly Musical Society, Horse and Groom, Great Portland Street, London		126	3	4
Protective Union, Lord Nelson, Nelson's Square, London		30	12	11
Collected at Perry's Coffee-house, Houndsditch, London		5	0	0
Old Trade Society, Cow and Hare, Eastgate Street, Stafford		10	0	0
Industrious Sick and Burial Society, Ashton		10	0	0
Odd-Fellows, Lostick Hill Lodge, No. 418		10	0	0
Ditto of Stockport, Denton and Barnsley, Nos. 1806, 1641, 807 and 306		6	10	0
Foresters of Ashton and Hyde		3	8	0
Druids of Stockport and Hyde		5	3	0
United Brethren of Ashton and Staleybridge		5	0	0
Benefit at the Pavilion Circus, Brighton		11	0	0
Concert at Belfast		7	0	0
Meeting at Brighton		1	3	6

	£	s.	d.
Collected at John Street Institution, City Road	10	0	0
Per Messrs. Holyoake	10	13	9
Per G. Lewis (Poplar)	5	0	0
Proceeds of a raffle for a Wardrobe made by the workmen at Rossell's, of Liverpool	16	0	0
Raffle for Iron Bedsteads given by a few Smiths of Liverpool	40	0	0
Raffle for Articles of Dress at Liverpool	26	0	0
W. J., of Preston	26	12	0
John Stuart, of Coventry	5	0	0
Compositors on Cambridge Chronicle	2	0	0
Ditto Preston Guardian	6	4	0
Ditto ,, Chronicle	0	12	0
Balance on hand, as per First Report	14	9	0½
Miscellaneous Trade Subscriptions of small amounts, principally from various foundries and workshops in Preston and other parts of Lancashire	559	13	9½

This analysis is of the greatest interest, as showing the wide-spread nature of the agitation and the spirit with which the trades' unions throughout the country adopted the Preston battle as their own.

Total Summary of the Balance-Sheets.

INCOME

	£	s.	d.
Weavers	67,751	19	0
Spinners	19,889	8	1½
Card-Room Hands	9,904	16	0
Throstle Spinners	2,476	15	9
Power-Loom Overlookers	2,079	12	9
Non-members Mill-Warpers	170	6	5
Tape Machine Sizers	854	8	4½
Cloth-lookers, &c.	192	8	11½
Amalgamated Expenses	1,896	2	4½
	£105,165	12	9

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS,

ARRANGED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By GODFREY LUSHINGTON,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The following remarks are founded only upon the information actually received, almost always of a limited, and often of a one-sided, character; they apply, except where otherwise specified, only to the subjoined list of trades, of some of which a separate account is also added:—

Glasgow	Coopers.	Liverpool.....	Iron Moulders.
	Clothlappers.		
	Tailors.	The Potteries ...	Potters.
	Potters.	Northumberland	Miners.
	Masons.	Durham	
	Joiners.	Lancashire	
	Slaters.	South Yorkshire	
	Painters.	West Yorkshire	
	Dyers.	Cheshire	
	Bakers.	Scottish	
Liverpool.....	Joiners.	Ironfounders.	
	Upholsterers.		
	Painters.	Blackburn	Bootmakers.
	Ship Painters.	Glassmakers.	

The chief object of all unions is to secure to the operative a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. The first question that arises is, is a Union necessary for this purpose? On this point there seems to be doubt amongst the masters. Of eight, four think combination unnecessary; three think it necessary; one believes combination to hasten, but not to produce a fair rise of wages. But only three out of the eight give instances in which a general advance of wages has taken place without the intervention of a society; the other five profess themselves unable to do so, and the great majority confess that the tendency of trade societies has been to keep up wages, in some cases even unwarrantably.

On the other hand, there is, as might be expected, absolute unanimity amongst the trade societies now under consideration (exceeding twenty in number), that combination is necessary to keep up wages, on the ground that a workman who has no Union fund to fall back upon, must accept reduction of wages or starve. They support their opinion by an appeal to experience. An instance is given amongst the Liverpool upholsterers, where a single operative applied for an increase of wages and was discharged; all the hands then applied for the same increase and received it. The position of the Scottish miners seems to have risen and fallen with their Union without any other disturbing causes. The least united trades, as those of the London bakers, the handloomers, &c., are stated to be the worst off; and in one and the same trade non-unionists are represented as receiving less wages than unionists. Instances are accumulated of successful efforts on the part of societies to raise or keep up wages, and only very rare instances are produced of a general rise without combination.

The expedients adopted to secure to the operative a fair day's wages for a fair day's work vary in different trades; they are generally one or more of the following:—

1. To abolish piecework and sub-contracts.
2. To establish a uniform standard or minimum, in the shape of a fixed price-list or scale of wages.
3. To prohibit engagements for a term longer than a week, or from pay to pay.
4. To define a normal day's work, and to discountenance or absolutely prohibit overtime.
5. To forbid unionists working with non-unionists.

Each of these expedients is enforced, if necessary, by a strike.

In all trades it would be possible for the workman to be paid by the time; in most trades, by either time or the piece; but in some, piecework is impracticable, because of the nature of the work itself; either it is a continuous process hardly divisible into pieces, as the work of a baker or farm-labourer, or it is so varied and complicated as to admit of no price-list which is not very elaborate and liable to lead to disputes, as is the case in some factories. In theory, however, where possible, piecework seems the right system; under it, as under a time-payment system, the better workman is insured constant employment and a high rate of wages as the reward of his superior skill, but under it alone does he get the benefit of his own superior industry and rapidity of execution. Nevertheless, as a fact, many trades, especially house-trades, such as masons, carpenters, painters, joiners, &c., jealously exclude all piecework. What is the reason of this? Not, it would appear, any objection to the system on principle, nor any desire to bring down the superior workman to the level of the inferior, but that experience shows piecework is the cause of reduction of wages. The argument is this—piecework leads to slop and inferior work, inferior work to lower pay. Again, it is easier for a master, making a series of petty bar-

gains under a piecework system, to depart little by little from the market wages, than when he has to engage his hands by the day or the week. These objections are felt strongly in the trades above mentioned; it is not so in others. The following list shows that it is greatly a matter of custom whether wages are paid by the piece or by time:—

Paid by the piece—	Paid by the time—
Bottlemakers.	Bakers.
Tailors.	Spinners.
Potters.	Painters.
Pitmen.	Masons.
Paid by both—	Clothlappers.
Coopers.	Byworkers in Mines.
Ironfounders.	Ironmongers.
Ribbon Weavers.	Slaters.
Watchmakers.	Upholsterers.

Trades' Unions, when payment is by the piece, strive to get recognised a price-list, or when payment is by time, a scale of wages. In most cases, this is intended by them as a minimum only, to set a bar to a gradual reduction of wages. On the other hand, the master treats it as a maximum; he fears, if he gives more to one operative, he will be obliged to give more to all. So, between the two—the man refusing to take less, the master to give more—the result is a uniform wage. But it is the result more than the object. By no means all Unions can enforce uniformity—some repudiate it. In many they allow a man to get more if he can; in some, as with the Liverpool ironmongers and upholsterers, to take less if he chooses, though they offer him aliment if he strike for refusing less. The Coventry watchmakers have not yet established a uniform list; the Glasgow bakers, who are paid by the time, receive weekly wages varying from 18*s.* to 22*s.*, according to ability; and coopers have three different rates of weekly wages—the operative offering himself for the rate at which he estimates his worth; the master accepting this estimate, or employing him by the piece.

It must not, however, be forgotten, that even under a uniform weekly wage system, or under piecework with an absolutely fixed price-list, the better workman retains the greatest advantage due to his industry and skill—namely, the probability of certain employment in slack time. This is most valuable in fluctuating trades; what it may amount to may be estimated by the single instance of the Glasgow painters, who are described as lying idle every year from six to sixteen weeks; so that, taking the whole year round, the average of their wages, which nominally would be 25*s.*, does not actually reach to 16*s.* per week.

Long hours injure health, stupify the moral energy of the workman, and give employment to those who have already too much to do, to the exclusion of those who are anxious to take work. When the operative is paid by the day or week, he has no object but to shorten the

hours which shall be held to constitute a day's work. The hours a few years ago were very long; the operatives, chiefly through the medium of their unions, have succeeded in establishing a considerable diminution; but it is impossible to say that in this respect they have gone too far. In none of the trades here considered—if we except miners, who are all paid by the piece, and who in some districts are limited to eight hours per diem—do the operatives work less than fifty-seven hours per week; many work sixty, as coopers, joiners, painters, &c.; tailors as much as seventy-two. The standard day's work is fixed either by the express rules of the union, or more commonly by custom, which is equally efficacious. But besides this, trades' unions in general discountenance voluntary overwork, whether this consists in working overtime if paid by the day, or in working too many hours if paid by the hour or by the piece. The reason is, not so much protection to the individual, who may be tempted at his own personal sacrifice to seek that increase in domestic comforts which sensibly follows from even a small addition to his wages, nor consideration for the unemployed, as the desire to prevent a reduction of wages. In estimating the position of an operative, people are apt to look exclusively to the amount of wages earned, disregarding the amount of labour bestowed. High wages, as they say, make a great figure in the books; so, if at the end of the week high wages are paid, the master may be inclined to believe the operative is too well off, or other hands may be tempted to come into a market perhaps already sufficiently supplied with labour. The result is, the master, if he can, lowers the wages, or the wages lower themselves. For these reasons, as well as for the general reasons against long hours, the trade unions are opposed to voluntary overwork, and seek to limit the hours of labour in all cases, whether wages are paid by the time or by the piece. In some trades overtime is prohibited altogether, because, from the peculiar circumstances of the trade, it is especially liable to abuse. Bakers must leave at latest at ten P.M.; shipjoiners are fined if they work after hours; tailors may in no case work beyond twelve hours, or take any work to their own homes. In the majority of trades, extra charges to the amount of twenty-five or thirty per cent. are demanded, by way of prohibitory penalties for working beyond the recognised hours; this is the case *e. g.* with those watchmakers and coopers who work by the piece, with masons, clothlappers, &c., who work by time. In some few instances overtime is not discountenanced, *e. g.* with English potters; also generally in the mines. But it appears on competent authority that in the mines overworking and drinking act and react upon each other. A man overworks, and when he leaves the pit he seeks a support in drink; he gets drunk, and is unable to work for one or two days; when he resumes, he has to work overtime to make up for lost time, and so again as before. A rule limiting the hours of work to eight per diem has been followed by the happiest effects in the South Yorkshire mines, where it has lately been introduced.

Where the hours of labour are limited, it is not only unnecessary

but unjust to limit the amount of work to be done in the time; unjust to the master, if he pays by time, unjust to the man, if he is paid by the piece. Accordingly, only in one of the trades here considered is such a limit found, viz., in some of the coal pits in South Yorkshire, where by custom a man leaves the pit as soon as he has earned 4*s*. But the better unions all disapprove of this practice, which indeed has no object but to keep the industrious down to the level of the idle.

Strikes are considered by trades' unions as the last resort. In all trades previous to a strike a formal negotiation with employers is the custom, if not declared imperative by their rules. Individuals who strike must first obtain the consent of their lodge, and a general strike of a whole lodge, in order to receive support from the general fund, requires the authority of the Central Committee, except perhaps in the case of a strike against a reduction of wages. In two trades, viz., tailors and English potters, the rules contain an arbitration clause, which has worked very well.

Strikes must be very rare where there are no unions, for then there is no reserve fund, and the operative still employed hesitates to contribute to those on strike, because he has no guarantee that his generosity will be reciprocated. Where there are unions, the number of strikes increases in proportion to the recklessness of the men (as in the mining trade), the selfishness of their leaders, or the cupidity of the masters. It is also great, wherever the principles of the trade remain unsettled, as amongst the Coventry weavers. They are fewest where the unions are best organized, as amongst the Glasgow tailors. As a fact, of the trades now under consideration, strikes are most frequent amongst miners, weavers, and carpenters; these last have hads even in the last ten years: they are most rare with the potters, tailors, clothlappers, and painters. By far the most common cause of strikes seems to be the refusal of a demand for a rise of wages; strikes against a reduction of wages or for a diminution of hours being comparatively rare. Amongst strikes for miscellaneous causes may be specified a strike of the weavers against piecework: of the Glasgow potters against a resumption of the "good from oven system:" of tailors against pitshops; of painters to secure the maintenance of the same prices for a whole year together: and of bootmakers against machinery. Lock-outs are very rare, and almost always have for their object the extermination of the Union. They have taken place in the flint glass trade, the iron moulders' trade, and some others.

The time chosen for strikes almost universally is when trade is brisk. On the whole, strikes seem to be successful, so far as the gaining of the immediate object for which they are undertaken; the cases where a compromise is effected are however numerous: complete failures are rare.

The workmen on strike are supported sometimes exclusively, always mainly, by their own Union, though this in most cases means

not the local Union, but the general association, of which the local Union is but one branch. Donations also are commonly given by other Unions, the larger ones by unions of those following the same trade as those on strike. For instance the Northumberland chain makers gave between £100 and £200 to the Staffordshire chain makers; the Derbyshire weavers, a considerable sum to the Coventry weavers, &c.

The allowance per diem of course is different in amount in the different trades: the proportion varies from three-eighths up to two-thirds of the full wages.

The cases of actual intimidation, such as would be liable to legal penalties, are very rare indeed, and to be found chiefly in the mining or factory districts: but no doubt the pressure and the fear of social excommunication are very strong and universal. The masters as a body are quite free from the charge of intimidation.

New men are occasionally introduced in consequence of strikes; in trades which require comparatively little skill, generally mere labourers; otherwise, inferior workmen from neighbouring towns. No effect upon wages has been produced by their introduction, because though remaining in the trade they have been few in number, or because at the close of the strike they have been dismissed at the demand of the unionists. This has been generally the case. Here and there they have been admitted into the Union and retained. Workmen seldom become employers in consequence of a strike; a few coopers did so, likewise a few painters and masons. After the Coventry strike some weavers set up looms in their own homes.

No cases are given of men on strike being permanently driven out of the trade by new comers, or of the shops of any employers being permanently closed.

In one instance, in the boot-trade, new machinery was introduced in consequence of the strike.

The strike is in all cases organized and conducted by the committee of the trades' union, sometimes the ordinary committee, sometimes one specially appointed for the purpose. In the case of the Coventry weavers' strike, non-unionists joined, and appointed a committee of their own, which co-operated with the Union.

Where trade societies exist singly, they rarely employ any means of ascertaining whether work is slack or brisk in different parts of the country: it is otherwise, however, where there is a central society with local lodges: these generally issue reports, some fortnightly, as the masons; others monthly, as the coopers and the painters; others quarterly, as the joiners and the ironmongers. In other cases again there is nothing beyond an irregular correspondence between the local secretaries.

In by far the great majority of trades, the Unions do not positively interfere with the number of apprentices employed by the masters, or with the work which they shall do, or the wages they shall receive. Several Unions—*e.g.* the coopers, potters, masons, and joiners—complain that the master takes too many, or does not indenture his

apprentices, or tries to make money out of them rather than to educate them, the result of which conduct is, that the market is overstocked with unskilled labourers, wages are reduced, and the trade discredited. In one case a master complains that the Union admits as members those who have not been duly apprenticed; in another, that they keep back apprentices in their education, lest they themselves should be ousted from the market. Doubtless, all Trade Unions can help to prevent this evil, as many do now, by rejecting those who have not been indentured; but the remedy lies chiefly in the hands of the masters, and if they do not enforce a strict system of apprenticeship, the Union cannot, for it has to recruit its members from those actually engaged in the trade.

The treatment of non-unionists depends not so much upon the nature of the trade, or the character of the leaders for the time being of the Union, as upon the strength of the Union. If the Union form a clear majority of the trade, there is generally either an express law or imperative custom prohibiting members altogether from working by the side of non-unionists. This is the case with bakers, some kinds of painters and cotton-spinners, slaters and masons. If the Union is not so strong, as with tailors, upholsterers, and Liverpool painters, the prohibition only extends to working with non-unionists in a shop where the majority of the men are members and five days' leave has been given to the non-unionists to join the Union. On the other hand, if the non-unionists are a majority, or a strong minority, especially in trades where a great number of hands are employed, as at the Potteries, Coventry ribbon factories, or in the mines (except in South Yorkshire), unionists and non-unionists work together. This is also the case with coopers, clothlappers, watchmakers, Glasgow masons and joiners, &c. It need hardly be said, that any rules of the Union on this head, though ostensibly binding upon their members only, are in fact penal against non-unionists and masters, for the master has to dismiss the latter in order to save a strike of the unionists, without whom his work cannot be carried on. The chain makers' Union in the North goes further: it publishes a black list of non-unionists, whereas the black list in other trades consists only of unionists who are defaulters, or work for less than standard wages, or have engaged themselves at a shop under strike.

The effect of the Trade Unions upon the skill of the workmen, upon their moral character, and upon the public opinion existing amongst them, is of course disputed. The masters are, as a rule, opposed to the Unions; two are indeed found to say that in their trade the Union might do good; one, if all the members were as well behaved as the leaders, the other, if the Union was properly conducted; a third thinks the Union has produced no effect on the character of the men, or on trade. Most, however, are agreed that Trade Unions have destroyed the proper relation—one of affectionate dependence—of the operative towards his master, have established instead a tyranny by the interested leaders of the Society—a tyranny

that affects at once the independent workman and the capitalist,—and have made the men dictatorial and presuming upon trade questions on which they are ignorant; also, that skill is discouraged by the uniform prices imposed upon the employer. One employer goes so far as to say that the Union has made the men careless and dishonest workmen to their employers. The Secretaries of the Unions give a very different representation; they are unanimous as to the result, though each alleges various reasons. As to the effect of union upon the skill of the workman, it appears that many Unions (as upholsterers, ironmongers, and painters) insist on competence as a condition of admission to the Society; other Unions strive to see that the laws as to apprenticeship are strictly observed; others again oppose the manufacture of bad goods, *e.g.* the chain makers, potters, and watchmakers; many prohibit piecework or sub-contracts, with a view to oust slop-work from the market.

In proof that the moral character of the workman is improved by the Union, it is advanced that the objects proposed by the Society, such as short hours, half-holidays, higher wages, abolition of truck, saving money when trade is brisk to avoid a reduction when trade is low, the feeling that each member has a common interest with all his fellow-workmen in the trade, and emancipation from absolute dependence on the master; all these must help to raise the workman as a man. No Society assists members who have been thrown out of work by their own misconduct, or appoints for its officers those who have offended against the laws of the land. One even suspends members for this reason. The carpenters' Union endeavours to prosecute all thieves in the trade. The coopers have abolished fines and footings, which apprentices or strangers taking work had to pay in drink; and both they and the ironmongers appeal to the elevation of the trade as a proof of the well working of the Union. No Scottish Union meets in a tavern.

Lastly, the public opinion amongst the men is stated to be raised by the Unions on the following grounds:—full information upon trade affairs is procured and disseminated; matters are openly discussed; both sides are heard; each member has to decide upon questions, such as strike or no strike, which vitally affect his interests, the minority have to acquiesce and do acquiesce in the decision of the majority, however great may be the personal sacrifice entailed by a strike; unions discountenance any acts of violence towards non-conformists, and uphold the system of arbitration in case of difference with their employers.

The improvements suggested by the secretaries to Trades' Unions are as follows:—Remove meetings from public-houses, as in Scotland; let the Society be registered; let a digest of the rules of all Unions be made with a view to establish a pattern form, applicable so far as is possible to all trades; let each trade be organized into a Central Society with local branches; let all Trades' Societies be organized together into one; let Courts of Conciliation be established.

The most various remedies for evils arising from Trade Societies

are suggested by employers for labour,—one says, educate the workmen more; another, don't educate them so much; one says, let the masters recognise the right of the Union to meet them on equal terms, and let the two consult together as to wages; another proposes to declare all combinations, whether of masters or men, illegal; one declares Courts of Conciliation to be the necessity of the age; another, a mere chimera.

It is clear from the inspection of the Rules of the various Societies, from the history of the strikes, and even from the mere number of them, that in many respects Trades' Unions are in an unsatisfactory condition. It cannot be denied that strikes are sometimes undertaken when there is nothing to justify a rise in wages, or for an improper purpose as to abolish machinery, or that Unions are often misled by interested adventurers, and propagate themselves by intimidation, and are always a serious inconvenience to masters. But the real question is, whether the remedy lies in the extinction of Trades' Unions or their re-organization. Now, extinction seems impossible; in nearly every trade the operatives believe in their utility; they have not been suppressed by laws which declared them illegal, or by masters or combinations of masters who have for this purpose made many most determined lock-outs. Nor could this extinction be just. There is, as has been shown, an almost universal concession that Societies have kept up wages, and that there are few general rises of wages without the interference of a Society. Several masters are compelled to admit that without combination the operative can hardly obtain a fair wage. The other alternative, therefore, forces itself upon the conviction, that Trade Societies should be retained, but re-organized, so as to secure justice to masters and operatives generally, as well as to unionists themselves.

GLASGOW TRADES.

For much of the information contained in the following abstract, the Social Science Association is indebted to the courtesy and kind assistance of the Council of United Trades of Glasgow, who issued the following Circulars :—

To the Committees of the various Trade Societies in Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

"Gentlemen,—The following resolution, which was unanimously adopted by the Council of United Trades, is earnestly recommended by us to your serious consideration; and we hope that you will assist us in carrying it into effect, by forwarding to this Council copies of your rules, and all information you are at present in possession of in regard to this question. As the 'National Association for the Promotion of Social Science' is expected to sit in Glasgow next year, it is to be hoped that by that time we will be able to give a full and explicit statement of the constitution and objects of 'Trades' Unions,' which are indispensable to the well-being of the working classes :—

"Resolved,—That we, the representatives of Trades' Unions in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, in Council assembled, hail with delight the proposal of an impartial inquiry into the nature and tendency of Trades' Unions, as proposed by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and resolve to recommend to our constituencies to co-operate with the gentlemen who are engaged in that inquiry, by giving them information on this most important subject. And be it therefore ordained, that reports from the various societies be given into this Council, with all convenient speed, of their willingness to co-operate in, or aversion to, the inquiry, that the same may be forwarded to the proper parties.

"The Circulars of the Association for the Promotion of Social Science, containing the questions of the inquiry, may be had from the Council of United Trades. All information in the meantime is earnestly requested and will be thankfully received by us.

"Yours respectfully,

"MATHEW LAWRENCE, *Secretary.*

"BELL'S TEMPERANCE HOTEL, 68, TRONGATE, GLASGOW,
"21*st Sept.*, 1859."

COOPERS.

[Materials:—Rules of National Association of Coopers; Fifth Annual Report of ditto, August, 1858-1859; Rules of Glasgow Coopers' Friendly Protecting Society; Answers on Behalf of ditto to Questions concerning Trades' Unions and Strikes.]

THE National Association of Coopers is a central association, having local branches in many important towns in the United Kingdom, including Birmingham, Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, &c. Its professed object is to render assistance to local societies "unjustly aggressed" by their employers, and to advance the general interests of the trade. Its funds are directed to be used to resist aggression, and for the purpose of raising prices, when the sanction of a majority of the societies has been previously obtained through their officers. The funds are raised by a contribution of 1*d.* per week per head, to be increased, if necessary, to 6*d.*; each local society to collect from its own members, and to hold the same when collected, but to account for it, and transfer it on demand. Men on strike (except the strike be a merely local one, and of shorter duration than six days) to receive 10*s.* per week from the general fund. Rule 15 prescribes that in case of a strike arising with any society connected with the Association, other towns which may be busy are to take as many men as they conveniently can to relieve the town on strike.

Any society in want of men at any time is bound to apply in the first instance to the various societies amalgamated in the National Association.

Members are bound under penalties to seek for work through the authorized channel of the officers of their own society.

In the year August, 1858, August, 1859, the expenses of the Executive Committee of the National Association amounted to nearly £100.

THE GLASGOW COOPERS.

Previous to the year 1833, the wages of coopers in Glasgow were very low—lower than in any town in Great Britain. In that year a Union was formed, and, in 1836, a strike made for an advance, and after a long struggle an advance of five per cent. was gained; in 1837, another strike was made for a further rise, but with no success. In 1844, the masters, after presenting several ineffectual petitions of their own to Government for a reduction of the duty on staves, induced the operatives to join. A reduction of the duty then took place, but did not result, as had been anticipated, in any rise of wages. In 1851, the present Society was established, and various reforms were introduced. Fines and footings, which hitherto had been exacted from strangers procuring work, or from apprentices entering the trade and passing from one stage of it to another, and which had led to habits of drinking, were abolished. In their stead were introduced annual *soirées*, pleasure excursions, vocal and instrumental concerts, &c., open to all coopers, whether members or not. A half-holiday was established on Saturday; a funeral and sick fund was raised in connexion with the Society, and generally the whole trade was organized, and has since been steadily improving.

There has only been one strike in the last ten years; that was for an advance of wages; the men were receiving about 17*s.* to 20*s.* per week, and they asked for 10*d.* more per hour. The strike lasted fifteen weeks, and eventually ceased, the men agreeing to take 4*d.* extra per hour, or ten per cent. extra if they worked by the piece. Estimating the number of men on strike to be 160, the weekly allowance to be 9*s.* per week (as a fact, it was 10*s.* for each married man, and 8*s.* for each single man for thirteen weeks, and after that 12*s.* and 10*s.* respectively), and wages lost at the time to have been about 20*s.*, this strike caused a loss of £1,320. The expense was defrayed partly by local funds, but mainly by the National Association of Coopers, which advanced no less a sum than £800. The present rate of wages amounts to about 20*s.* to 22*s.* per week. Coopers are paid generally by the hour; there are three rates of wages, and the operative asks for that rate to which he deems himself entitled; if the master does not agree with the operative's estimate of himself, he engages him by the piece. There is no rule as to the number of hours' work; but, by custom, this is fixed at sixty hours in the week, *i.e.*, ten on week days, eight on Saturday, and the remaining two to be made up by extra work on week days. By Rule 12 no member is allowed to enter into any engagement either directly or indirectly for any given time longer than from pay to pay.

There are 140 members; the entrance fee is 1*s.* 8*d.*, and the fortnightly subscription is 5*d.*, and 4*d.* extra per fortnight to those members who desire to be members of the sick fund. The chief benefit to be derived from the Society is aliment of 10*s.* per week to any member who is compelled to leave his employment in consequence of reduction being threatened, or for his connexion with the Society; but the fact must be clearly proved before the aliment is granted,

and misconduct towards the employer works a forfeiture of all right to aliment. Also, there are funeral allowances varying from £2 to £3.

The ordinary term for apprenticeship is six years, but it is not imperative that lads should be formally indentured. The trade society does not attempt to dictate to the master the number of apprentices he shall have, but as a fact there are too many, and they are insufficiently educated. It appears that it is the small establishments that are the nurseries of the apprentices. In Glasgow there were a short time ago, altogether, in and out of the Society, about 500 coopers; of these 132 were apprentices.

Systematic tramping is discouraged, but some assistance is nevertheless given to members on the move.

GLASGOW CLOTH LAPPERS.

[Materials:—Answers by the Secretary to the questions concerning Trade Unions and also Strikes; Rules of Glasgow Cloth Lappers' Friendly Protective Society; a few miscellaneous documents.]

THE object of the Society is stated to be legally to protect the interests of the employer and employed, and especially to assist its members who are thrown out of employment, and to protect them from all encroachment on their hours of labour.

Rule 2. No one to become a member without producing evidence of his qualification.—Entrance 5*s.* 3*d.*, weekly contributions 3*d.*

Rule 5. Aliment to those thrown out of employment (not on account of their own misconduct) to be 7*s.* per week for the first eight weeks, 5*s.* for the next eight weeks, and 3*s.* for eight following weeks.

Rule 7. Any member refusing to work after the regular hours of the trade, and leaving his employment in consequence, shall receive two-thirds of his wages per week for twelve weeks, after that time be put on the ordinary aliment sum.

The Society is a gradually increasing body, it numbers two hundred members: and is connected with no other society than the Trades' Council at Glasgow.

Wages are paid by the day.

The last strike was in 1851, and it lasted for six weeks: the wages were then from 14*s.* to 16*s.*, and the hours, sixty-four per week. The men struck for a diminution of the hours to fifty-eight, and eventually obtained a diminution to sixty-two.

In 1857, apparently on the application of the operatives, an increase was made to their wages of 2*s.* weekly, so that the rate was from 16*s.* to 18*s.* In 1858, the operatives made another application for the reduction of the hours of labour from sixty-two to fifty-seven, which would make the working hours from 6 A.M. to 6 P.M. The masters consented to reduce them to sixty hours, but refused an further concession, and the operatives did not press it.

In April, 1859, a Committee of the Calender Masters, without consulting the operatives, issued a code of rules entitled "General

Rules to be observed for the mutual benefit of the Trade of Calenderers and Clothlappers," and based upon rules, which, in 1843, had been agreed to by a committee of masters and workmen. The operatives felt bound to make a protest against rules made to bind them, and made without their assent; especially as they were determined not, permanently at least, to submit to more than fifty-seven hours of labour per week, and were opposed to the regulations contained in the rules as to over time. No copy of these regulations has been supplied. Appended is a balance-sheet for one year.

	£	s.	d.
In hand	68	11	11
For pence money & articles	144	2	1
Fines	2	9	6
Interest from Bank	1	19	2
	£217	2	8

	£	s.	d.
To D. B. Finlay	6	0	0
T. J. Robertson	1	10	0
To A. MacGregor	1	4	0
Salary to office bearers	4	10	6
Funeral money	9	1	6
New chest and 3 keys	0	19	0
New minute book	0	3	0
Printing 300 copies of Annual Report	0	8	0
Do. 200 pass books	1	18	0
Do. 500 copies of new rules	1	14	6
500 tin tickets for meeting	0	5	0
Glass globe	0	2	0
500 notices for members in arrears	0	9	0
Printing 700 bills	1	4	6
Half of meeting with Levy Committee	0	5	9
Printing 250 circulars	0	8	0
Writing paper, &c.	0	2	6
8 General Meetings	2	2	0
64 Committee Meetings	4	6	6
Expenses to parties looking after money in banks when closed	0	6	0
Posting and delivering bills	0	3	0
2 Summonses	0	6	2
Auditor	0	3	10
To bank trustees when name changed	0	7	0
For Federal Union	1	0	0
liment	155	1	2
Total	194	0	11
Balance in hand	23	1	9
	£217	2	8

GLASGOW TAILORS.

[Materials:—Answers to the questions concerning Trade Unions by the Secretary of the Union: a full copy of the minutes of the Union for the year (October) 1856-1857; and a Balance-sheet.]

THE Glasgow Operative Tailors' Society, instituted December 13, 1849, is confined to Glasgow tailors, and connected with no other association except the Trades' Council at Glasgow. Its object, as defined in the preamble to its rules, is "to effect a general union of

the operative tailors of Glasgow, and a proper understanding between employers and employed; also to assert principles in case of any attempt to reduce wages; to assist each other, and to advance the interests of the trade at large." Open to members of this Society is also "The Glasgow Operative Tailors' Sick, Funeral, and Trade Protection Society," having three separate funds for three separate objects, the protection fund being available in case of any dispute arising between employer and employed in matters relating to the trade.

The number in the Trade Union is 876; the entrance fee 2*s.* 6*d.*, the weekly contribution 1*d.*; the strike aliment 12*s.* per week for four weeks, except in case of a general strike. For the benefit club the entrance is 2*s.* 6*d.*; the weekly contribution 3*d.* The "sick-aliment" from 4*s.* to 8*s.* per week; the funeral payment from £2 to £3. It does not appear very clearly how the protection fund is disposed of; or how its object differs from that of the Trade Union.

The accounts submitted to us are as follows:—

		Cr.				*Dr.*		
		£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
From formation to January	1857 ...	760	0	5½	—	847	5	10
January 1857 to „	1858 ...	240	4	6	—	331	9	9½
„ 1858 to „	1859 ...	136	13	2	—	119	5	3½
„ 1859 to „	1860 ...	212	8	10½	—	208	4	3½
						1,001	5	2½
					Balance	348	2	9½
		1,349	8	0	—	1,349	8	0

Benefit Society.

		Cr.				*Dr.*		
		£	*s.*	*d.*		£	*s.*	*d.*
May 1858 to May	1859 ...	125	10	9	—	125	10	9
May 1859 to January	1860 ...	159	19	4	—	139	16	8
January 1860 to April 7	1860 ...	86	13	3	—	102	14	0
						368	1	5
					Balance	4	1	0
		372	3	4	—	372	3	4

Gifts to other Societies on Strike.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Belfast Tailors	20	0	0
Glasgow Shoemakers	30	0	0
Rothsay Tailors	10	0	0
London Lock-out	30	0	0
Total	£90	0	0

There is no organized association of masters in the trade.

The system is one of piecework with a uniform scale of prices attached; the master to see that the workmanship is up to par, the average amount of wages earned, 24*s.* per week. This scale is settled in the following manner. A committee is appointed at a

general meeting of the operatives' Society to draw up a scale of prices; this scale is then submitted to a full special meeting. If it gives satisfaction, the employers are requested to depute a committee of equal numbers to meet the operatives' committee; any alteration that may meet with their joint approval to be referred again to the whole body of the operatives. Should that body approve, the list of prices is then signed by the two chairmen of the respective committees, and becomes the recognised law of the trade.

The hours of work are by the 19th rule of the Society restricted to twelve hours exclusive of "diets," or from six A.M. to seven P.M. including them; but there is no restriction put upon the amount of work to be done in these twelve hours. All work to be done on the shop premises, under penalty of fines, or if necessary, of erasure from the books.

This trade is happily free from general strikes. This arises partly from the fact that, owing to the uniform demand and supply of the market, prices, fluctuate but little, the last rise having been in 1855 from 21*s.* to 24*s.* per week: partly from the admirable provision for settlement of disputes made by rules 11 and 21. These are as follows. "This Society being established upon principles of strict justice, having for its object the protection and furtherance of the interests of both employers and employed, it is desirable that all disputes which may arise between them should be submitted to arbitration as the most speedy and equitable way of arriving at a conclusion, and it shall be the constant aim of the Society to see that this desire be as far as practicable carried out. . . . In the event of any dispute arising, the men shall first reason the matter with the employer, and if unsuccessful, they shall immediately thereafter inform the Committee of the same, who will use their best endeavours to bring about an amicable adjustment of the case. . . . The arbiters shall consist of an equal number of employers and employed, whose decision shall be final, the disputants first subscribing minute of submission, binding themselves to abide by the same, or an agreement binding them to enter into a regular submission, when required, containing the usual clauses." Not until these endeavours have been unsuccessful, and unless the Committee think there is a justifiable cause to strike, does a strike take place."

These provisions are often called into operation. An individual employer seeks to reduce the recognised price, or to let out work to "sweaters," or otherwise to wrong his workmen; a deputation from the Society is at once sent to expostulate; this generally succeeds; it did in sixteen cases and more in the year October, 1856 and 1857, for in cases of this kind the employer knowing he has been trying to undersell his neighbours by getting his work more cheaply done, rarely is ready to meet his equals at the arbitration board. If therefore he does not yield, a strike against him follows; of these however there were not above four or five instances in the above mentioned year. In one case, after the strike had begun, the employer imported fresh hands from a distance, but at the end of three weeks he dis-

missed them, and accepted the terms of the Society: a pretty clear proof that the best workmen belonged to it.

But the chief grievance in the year 1856-1857 was the pit shops, or underground working places. The first step towards their abolition was an attempt of the Society to induce the Sanitary Committee for the City to move: this failing, to offer an aliment of 12*s.*, *i.e.*, 4*s.* per week beyond the usual allowances only to such men as might be willing to strike against pit shops, and eventually to declare a strike imperative. This strike lasted, off and on, for two years, with more or less success. Several masters submitted their shops to the examination of the Committee, or improved them; altogether, good rooms were provided for 260 men who had worked before in pits; and eventually a memorial, got up by the Trade Union and signed by 7,570 citizens, was presented to the Town Council; and, owing to this, a clause against pit shops was inserted in the Sanitary Act for Glasgow.

The Trade Union has no rules affecting apprentices: to tramp tailors presenting a card 6*d.* is given and a night's lodging, and on Saturday one shilling and two nights' lodging.

Two rules may here be noticed; Rule 18, that operatives going into a shop to work in connexion with this Society shall be requested to join the Society *five* days after their entrance into the said shop. On their refusal to do so, notice shall be given to the Committee, who shall then take such legal steps as may be necessary under the circumstances.

Rule 25. During the time of a strike, if any man go into a shop which is on strike, or in any way act dishonourably to the interest of the Society, his name shall be printed and circulated over town and country as widely as possible, unless he settle with the Committee, &c.

Altogether, this Union seems to be managed in an extremely sensible and conciliatory manner, and justly to administer the affairs of the trade.

THE POTTERS.

[Materials:—Answers by Operatives, viz. a Glasgow potter and an English potter, to the questions concerning Trade Unions, and by the Glasgow potter to the questions concerning Strikes; and a few miscellaneous documents; Rules of the Glasgow potters, Flat Branch Defence Association.]

The Potters form a very considerable trade, with various distinct branches, *e.g.* throwers, turners, hollow-ware pressers, flat pressers, oven-men, gilders, printers, packers, warehousemen, and others. In Scotland, altogether they number 3,500; in England, in the Potteries alone, 2000; and there are considerable works in Yorkshire also. The organization of the potters in the Potteries, and of the potters in Scotland, is independent, but framed on the same principle. Each branch has a Union of its own, with a separate finance, with lodges at the different towns, and with one town for its head-quarters. For instance, the hollow-ware pressers have lodges at Tunstall, Burslem, Hanley, Fenton, and Langton, and they meet periodically at Hanley.

All the unions again have one common executive in Scotland; it is called the central board, and meets at Glasgow. In the Potteries there is a weekly journal, price one halfpenny, with a circulation of 2000, written by operatives working at the bench, and to judge by six numbers of the current year, the tone and purport of it is very good; questions are fairly argued on both sides, and such points, as, the necessity for the education of the children even at the cost of the operatives, and the duty of workmen to show the same justice towards their fellow-workmen as they demand from their employer, are fully insisted upon. The operatives have no official source of information concerning their own trade; they trust to "the penny stamp," *i.e.* casual chances to bring them news. In the Potteries the masters also are combined, to the number of about thirty, into a "Chamber of Commerce," but they do not seem to be a very united body; some are ever found ready to undersell their neighbours.

At no Union in the Potteries is an entrance fee charged, except in that of the oven men, and there it is 1*s.*; in Scotland, for flat-branch potters, the entrance fee is 1*s.*, and the weekly contribution 3*d.*, and out of the fund thereby raised an allowance of 7*s.* is made to each member thrown out of employment, with 2*s.* extra for his wife, and 1*s.* extra for each of his children. This Union does not make any provision expressly with a view to a strike; but by Rule 6, it is prescribed that members having grievances with their employers, and being desirous of leaving their employment, shall give intimation to the president, who shall call a meeting of the committee, and unless the committee authorize the member to leave his situation, he shall not be entitled to receive aliment. And for more than four to leave their situation for the same reason, the authority of a general meeting is requisite.

In "the Potteries" there are no tramps, or at all events, there is no provision for them; and in the Scotch Society, it is held the duty of the members to discountenance collections for regular tramps.

In pottery there is no machinery invented, or likely to be invented, to supersede the potter, though some may be discovered to facilitate his work.

If we except a "set wage" of 24*s.* per week, which is occasionally found in Scotland, but never taken by a firstrate hand, the system is universally one of piecework. In the Potteries the men are hired at Martinmas for a year, with a notice of one month in case of either party desiring to be free; and, at the same time, there is fixed for the ensuing year a scale of piecework prices. These prices are the minimum; a workman may, if he can, get higher, but he will be supported by his Union if he refuse to take less. These prices would make wages about 5*s.* per diem, *i.e.* 30*s.* per week, if the trade is brisk; but the potters' trade seems to be liable to great fluctuation, and hands are often left idle for two or three days in the week, so much so that one operative calculates the average wages actually earned during the last seven years to be not so high as 18*s.*, if more than 16*s.* per week.

The hours of work are fixed by custom, but by custom only, to ten per diem. Nowhere in the trade is any limit set upon the amount of work to be done during these ten hours, but in "the Potteries," though not in Scotland, overtime is discountenanced by the Trades' Union. The rate of wages has varied very little during the last few years.

Strikes, happily, do not seem to be common. In Scotland, the last strike was in 1859, from September 21st to December 8th (against the resumption of the good-from-oven system, about which see *infra*); but it was not very important, and was conducted from the first against the consent of a large minority of leading members, and it terminated in favour of the masters. In "the Potteries," the last general strike was in 1836, which is still remembered with dread. One signal cause of the absence of strikes in the Potteries is, that the written yearly agreement contains a clause that, "If any dispute arise between the parties as to the prices or wages to be paid by virtue of such agreement, the dispute shall be referred to an arbitration board of six persons, to consist of three manufacturers chosen by the masters, and three working potters elected by the working men." This arbitration clause has been much tried, and has worked most successfully in ninety out of one hundred cases. One instance may be given:—In December, 1859, a complete scale of prices to be given for all goods made by the hollow-ware pressers of three great firms was settled by arbitration.

The evils in the trade, which seem most to call for remedy, are as follows:—

1. The use of ill-ventilated and generally unwholesome places of labour. The potter's life is a short one.

2. The employment of children of tender years; any alteration however would be difficult, because any loss incurred under it would fall upon the operative potters, who would see removed to school the boys who now work under them and are very remunerative.

3. The good-from-oven system. Under this the bowl makers are not paid for their work until the bowls are returned from the kiln, and then only if returned perfect. The disadvantages to the operative are obvious; he has to wait for his wages sometimes a week or more, until it is the convenience of his master to put the bowls into the kiln, and meantime his work may be lost, or mislaid, or injured, in the storeroom; then at length, when it comes from the kiln, and he is about to be paid, he finds himself mulcted for any imperfection whether of his own making or not; the material supplied by the master may have been bad, or the fireman may have injured it in the kiln, yet the maker must pay. This system gives great dissatisfaction; the resumption of it was the cause of the strike in Scotland; indeed, it is obviously unjust. In 1856 the judge of a county court in Staffordshire decreed in favour of a workman suing for his wages thus mulcted, because the master had refused to set aside the rejected ware of the workman for re-examination either by arbitration or the legal tribunal.

The other system is the "good-from-hand," under which the goods are counted when made, and wages, either in full or in part, paid in advance, with liability to deduction for any imperfect workmanship afterwards discovered in the kiln.

4. The toleration of inferior work, both by the public who want cheap goods, and by masters trying to undersell one another. One object of the Glasgow Potters' Flat Branch Defence Association is expressed to be "to discountenance whatever leads to our moral degradation, or retards the perfection of trade as an art." An operative, complaining of this, quotes as follows from Wedgwood:—"A competition for cheapness, and not for excellence of workmanship, is the most frequent and certain cause of the rapid decay and entire destruction of arts and manufactures. The desire of saving much in a little time, without respect to the taste or quality of the goods, leads manufacturers and merchants to ruin the reputation of the articles which they make and deal in; and whilst those who buy prefer, for the sake of fallacious saving, mediocrity to excellence, it will be impossible for them to improve or keep up the quality of their works."

One form in which this evil shows itself is the relaxation of the rules concerning apprentices. Under the old system boys were regularly indentured to be apprentices for seven years; they received for payment, irrespective of the work they actually produced (though diligence was enforced), wages at the rate of 2*s.* a week the first year, rising 1*s.* every year. At the end of the seven years the apprentice expected that his master would retain him as journeyman for the next two or three years. This rule however was not enforced, the masters alleged as a reason that the indenture stamp, 21*s.*, was too high; Government on application reduced it to 2*s.* 6*d.*, but yet no change followed; and it is only a short time ago that in one town, containing twenty pottery manufactories, not one master took any pains to carry the rules out. The custom is now to have no indenture; to hire boys, just like journeymen, at Martinmas, for the year; they begin with weekly wages, and then are advanced to piecework, but at lower prices than journeymen. Under this loose system both masters and apprentices lose sight of their mutual obligations. The apprentice often suddenly leaves at the end of his second or third year, just at the time when he is beginning to be useful to his master. And on the other hand, at the end of the seven years, the master often dismisses without scruple the apprentice, if he has no particular need for him; and under these circumstances, the apprentice will sometimes consent to work two years more at apprentice wages. But the general effect is the worst. It overstocks the market with unskilled, unattached workmen, wages are lowered, and the quality of the goods deteriorates.

The same reason which leads the operatives to protest against a superfluity of ill-trained apprentices, causes them also to discountenance the system of tramps, which is suited only for trades requiring comparatively little skill.

GLASGOW MASONS.

[Materials:—Answers to questions for Employers of Labour by a special Committee appointed for the purpose by the Masters; to questions upon Strikes by the same Committee, and by the Secretary to the Operative Society; and to questions upon Trade Unions by the Secretary to the Operative Society; Rules of the Friendly Society of Operative Stone Masons, passed in 1856; a few miscellaneous papers.]

THE Glasgow masons are apparently independent of the English masons, though governed by a similar code of laws, and there is no interchange of privileges between the two Societies. They are incorporated into a society, the objects of which are "materially to support each other while in search of employment, and also in case of sickness or accident, and the interment of deceased members; as also to regulate the price and lessen the hours of labour; to render support to trades in union, for the purpose of resisting any infringement that may be offered against their rights and privileges." Accordingly there is a sick fund and also an accident fund open to members of the trade society, raised by fixed contributions of those who are desirous to take advantage of the privileges connected with them.

There are thirty-six branches of the Society, and the aggregate number of members is about 3,500, but each branch or lodge may make bye-laws of its own, or strike at its own cost, but is bound to transmit all funds not required for its local management to a central committee, which is appointed to serve for six months, and has for its object "to form a centre of action, that the various branches may the more readily communicate with each other to keep every branch strictly within the pale of the Society's laws, and to check any extravagant use of the funds, which are to be appropriated to no other purpose than the payment of legal strikes, and other expenses provided for in the rules."

The rule for admission is that "the candidate be recommended by a payable member of the Society, who shall be responsible for his being of the trade, a majority of those present to decide whether he be admitted. No one to be admitted without strict inquiry as to fitness." Any member after election to be suspended for three months, if guilty of a breach of the laws of the land.

The entrance fee is 5*s.*, weekly contribution, 3½*d.*

No financial statement has been furnished to us, except the following table of expenditure by way of benefit from 1854-1859.

Funeral allowance	£1,509	0	0
Sick ditto	35	0	0
Accident and sick levies	1,797	0	0
Strike pay	792	0	0
Tramp relief	169	0	0
Loans to Union Trades	850	0	0
London lock-outs	336	14	0
Wallace's Monument	67	16	0
	£5,556	10	0

There is no combination of masters in the trade.

The wages are paid fortnightly: in 1857 they were as high as 27*s.* per week. They have now gone back to the terms fixed by two committees of the masters and operatives at the close of the strike in 1853, viz.:—

1. The operatives to work fifty-seven hours per week.

2. The rate of wages (as a minimum) to be 5*d.* per hour, *i.e.* 25*s.* per week.

3. Six months' notice to be given by either party wishing a change.

The rule as to overtime and piecework is as follows:—"Working overtime tending to our general injury by keeping members out of employment, shall be abolished, except in cases of accident or necessity, but no strike to take place for the abolition thereof without a special grant. Members persisting in working overtime in opposition to the lodge of which they are members, shall be fined at the discretion of such lodge. A lessening of the hours of labour would prove a great remedy for the wrongs we suffer. It is also requested that lodges harassed by piecework, or sub-contracting, do apply at a reasonable time for a grant to abolish it. When sub-contracting and piecework are abolished, such is binding on the society."

The principal rules as to strikes are as follows:—

"1. Any payable member thrown out of employment in consequence of being a member, or for adhering to the laws of this Society [or for transacting or regulating any matter connected with the Society], shall receive the sum of 15*s.* per week, provided such member shall not have used abusive language towards the employer, and payable members on legal strike receive the sum of 10*s.* per week.

"2. When a strike for an advance of wages is contemplated by any lodge, the secretary to report the same to the central committee, showing the number that would be out, the number of payable and paying members, the state of trade, and the position of the Society in the neighbourhood; also the number of members belonging to such lodge that voted for and against the application being made. The secretary to summon each member of the lodge to discuss whether a strike shall be made or not—the votes to be by ballot: the votes of the majority to be binding.

"3. If any employer attempt to reduce wages at any period of the year, or attempt to introduce piecework where it has not been established, or to increase the hours of labour, or infringe upon the established meal hours, or introduce individuals not of the trade, brothers may resist such infringements without a grant, if acceded to by a majority of the members of the lodge, but in all cases to wait on employers previous to striking."

There have been no general strikes of late in the trade; the last was in July, 1853, and lasted for six weeks. The object of the men was to get their wages raised from 4½*d.* to 5½*d.* per hour, *i.e.*, from 23*s.* to 26*s.* per week; to reduce their hours from sixty to fifty-seven; and to be entitled to six months' notice before change of wages. The

1857. March. For a rise from 24*s.* to 26*s.* Lasted a few days :—successful.

1857. October. Against a reduction from 26*s.* to 23*s.* 9*d.* : lasted a fortnight and failed.

1858. For a rise from 23*s.* 9*d.* to 26*s.* After a few days, successful.

The rules make no provision for tramps, and do not affect apprentices : the usual term of apprenticeship is five years.

The following are the balance-sheets for the years from November, 1857, to November, 1858.

INCOME.	£	*s.*	*d.*
Nov. 2, 1857, Cash in Bank and Treasurer's hand ..	361	10	8½
To Entry Money	66	9	0
„ Contribution Money	214	14	1
„ Emblematical Cards	0	10	8
„ Drawn at Special Meetings	3	14	7½
„ Fines	0	3	6
Received from Branch Lodges as follows :—			
Renfrew £7 10			
Greenock 7 0			
Dumfries 3 10			
Linlithgow ... 1 4			
	19	4	0
To Interest added to Bank account	4	16	6
„ Drawn for Hall Rents	28	0	0
	£699	8	1

EXPENDITURE.	£	*s.*	*d.*
By Rent of Hall	28	8	8½
„ Repairing and Decorating Hall	7	15	11
„ Water, Gas, Coals and Taxes	4	17	1
„ Expenses incurred in Law Suit	0	12	7
„ Printing and Stationery	16	9	7½
„ Special Meetings	14	8	7
„ Commission to Collectors	3	4	0
„ Parcels to Branches ..,...	0	6	2
„ Deputations	2	6	3
„ Paid to Members on Strike.....	300	6	5
„ Paid to Trades' Council	1	5	0
„ Paid for Designs and Details of Hall Desk...	0	15	0
„ Expended on Baking Association.....	2	10	0
„ Office-Bearers' and Hall Keeper's Salaries.....	22	1	4
	£405	1	8
" Cash in Bank and Treasurer's hand	294	1	5
	£699	8	1

WILLIAM SINCLAIR, JOHN STRUTHERS, } *Auditors.*

In the preceding year the expense of strikes was only £28, but a loan of £100 for the masons', for the same purpose, was repaid. In the following year we find these items: Victim money £6 6*s.* 8*d.*—Loan to Plummers, 100*l.*—Advanced on Lawsuit, £44 15*s.*

The master joiners of Glasgow formed themselves into a society in the year 1836, on the occasion of a large strike against working by candle-light out of the workshop, and with the avowed intention of ultimately dissolving the Union of the men. The rules, as then drawn up, made provision for a general lock-out by the masters, under very heavy penalties to those who abstained, and required that no member should employ a workman who did not subscribe a declaration that he was not a member of the Union.

This masters' Society appears to have disappeared, or to have been absorbed into the "West of Scotland Master Joiners' Protection Society," a society which has adopted more moderate terms, requires no declaration from the workman, does not profess to ask the extinction of the Union, and does not so clearly contemplate a general lock-out. The principal rules are as follows:—

Rule 1. The object and purpose of the Association to be defined generally as this, viz.:—To support, encourage, and defend each other against all combinations and demands and interference of the workmen, which may be deemed of an oppressive and unreasonable character; and, for these purposes, to contribute to a common fund, and to co-operate and act in concert.

Rule 2. In particular, the members not to employ the workmen or apprentices of their fellow-members when on strike; not to employ the workmen at any time when the member they are leaving signifies dissent on grounds which the committee consider sufficient: and never to employ apprentices under indenture or engagement to others, without their master's written clearance. Further, the members to make common cause with any one or more of their number, who may, in the opinion of the committee, be unfairly attacked or interfered with by combinations of workmen, or by their own *employées;* to aid the masters so interfered with, in all actions at law, and other measures, judicial and extra-judicial, required for resisting strikes, punishing misdemeanors, repressing insubordination, and otherwise extricating the masters so attacked or interfered with from the difficulties in which they may be involved by such combination, or by their workmen; the particular time, method, and extent of the aid being determined and directed by the committee, as they think meet, with reference to each particular case.

Rule 3. If so determined at a general meeting of the Society, for the purpose of more effectually putting down strikes and repressing insubordination, or resisting interference at any particular works, or for otherwise defending or protecting the general interests of any one or more, or all of the members, to be bound to stop their works and warn off, and at the end of the warning turn off, their journeymen-hands, and that to such extent as regards the number to be turned off, and for such time, as may be necessary. Members who may thus be subjected to loss from breach of contract with their employers, or otherwise, may be compensated therefor out of the funds of the Society, to such extent as may be determined by the committee.

Rule 4. To mitigate the inconvenience and loss to ensue from such necessary breach of their contracts with employers, a clause to be inserted in all contracts to be completed within a specified time, to be entered into by any member of the Society from and after the date of his signing the constitution, exempting himself from all responsibility to arise from the strikes of the men, partial or total, to the effect of the time such strike may endure being abated or not reckoned in computing the stipulated time for such contracts; and

the obligation in such contract for penalties or damages, or other consequences to ensue from the work not being finished in the time stipulated, to be qualified to this effect.

Rule 5. A fund shall be provided to meet expenses; to which fund the masters shall contribute rateably, the standard of contribution being the number employed on the average of the preceding year, as appearing from the pay books; the rate of assessment to be fixed by the committee.

Rule 7. A general meeting every three months.

Rule 10. A fine not exceeding £20 to follow any breach of the constitution.

PAINTERS.

[Materials:—Answers by the Secretary of the Glasgow Master Painters' Association to the questions addressed to Employers of Labour and to the questions on Strikes; Report of three Meetings of the Trades' Council on the subject of the Painters' Strike of 1860; newspaper extracts, and a few miscellaneous papers.]

In this trade piecework is practically prohibited by the Union; the payment is by the hour. In 1845 this was 3½*d.*; in 1847, 4*d.*; in 1850 there was a strike, and wages rose to 4½*d.*; in 1855, in consequence of another strike, they rose to 5*d.*, and have remained at that point ever since. The men state that in summer their working time is ten hours a day for five days, and seven hours on Saturday—a full week's wages being 23*s.* 9*d.* In winter, employers regulate the hours; these generally are from six to seven per diem—in all from thirty to forty a week; and wages are paid for the exact number of hours worked; so strictly, indeed, is this rule kept, that if an accident occurs, as by the falling of a scaffolding, the injured man is paid up to the exact hour of the occurrence. A full weekly wage in winter is 16*s.* 8*d.* They also state that the greater number of the men are out of work from six to sixteen weeks every year, and therefore, taking the whole year round, the average weekly wages is 14*s.* Neither master nor man is required to give warning.

In 1853 the operatives established their Union, which includes 97 per cent. of operative painters in Glasgow, to make wages uniform throughout the trade. With this view an agreement was drawn up to be signed by both operative and master at the beginning of the year. It contained the rate of wages which was to be paid if the man was employed, and a mutual undertaking that during the ensuing year neither party would attempt a change in that rate. There appears to have been some difficulty in procuring the signature of the masters to this document, and also some irregularity in carrying it out on the part of some masters. However, the practice remained up to the end of last year. In December, 1859, a large minority of masters came to an understanding with each other that they would not sign the document. In March, 1860, the following memorial was presented to the masters, containing the terms on which the journeymen proposed to work, which were the same as those of the preceding year:—

"TO THE MASTER PAINTERS OF GLASGOW AND SUBURBS.

"*The following Memorial from the Members of the Glasgow Operative House and Ship Painters' Society is respectfully submitted to you for consideration:—*

"GENTLEMEN,—We have great pleasure in returning you our thanks for the generally fair and upright manner in which you have fulfilled the agreement of the past year.

"Although the depression of trade might have been put forth as a reason for breach of bargain, we are happy to acknowledge that only in a very few cases was any unfair advantage taken, and then only by parties who occupy a very small position in the trade, both as regards the amount of work they do, and the manner in which it is executed.

"We now respectfully submit for your consideration the terms on which we propose to work, from the 10th of April, 1859, till the 14th of April, 1860:—

"First—That the wages be not less than 23*s.* 9*d.* per week of fifty-seven hours, or 5*d.* per hour.

"Second—We dislike the working of overtime. It is attended to us,—individually and collectively,—with many disadvantages. We, would respectfully request that employers only resort to it in cases of emergency, and then only when there are no unemployed members of the trade to be got. To assist in effecting this, we propose that for every hour worked before six o'clock A.M., or after six o'clock P.M., or after the usual hour of quitting on Saturday, the men be paid not less than 7*d.* Lost time may be made up the same day only at the ordinary rate. Also, when working in the country, at the season of the year when on short time, the men may work on Saturday as long as on the other days of the week without being entitled to the overtime allowance.

"Third—That when working beyond the two-mile boundary from the Royal Exchange, the men be paid 6*d.* a day extra, and be at the boundary at the hour of commencing work when required; and that when working within the two-mile boundary, and beyond one mile from the Royal Exchange, they be paid 3*d.* per day extra, and be at the job at the hour of commencing work when required; and when within one mile from the Royal Exchange, be either at the shop or at the job as required.

"Fourth—That when obliged to take lodgings in the country, the men be paid 4*s.* per week extra, or 8*d.* per day.

"N.B.—These extra rates apply alike to summer and winter day.

"Fifth—That the men be paid weekly, and, unless paid at the job, travel to the shop for their pay in their master's time.

"Sixth—That there be no lying day kept, but wages paid in full up to the time of receiving them.

"We have repeatedly called your attention to the evils resulting from the lax manner in which apprentices are often engaged, and the nearly systematic method in favour with many employers of taking

on and paying them off, according to the fluctuations of trade; and so little good has resulted from our efforts, that we are greatly discouraged from endeavouring to promote a just settlement of this matter, of which the wise arrangements adopted by our Association in 1853, and cordially coincided in by your body, seemed at one time likely to effect a salutary adjustment, and the non-fulfilment of which has aggravated the bad state of matters so much complained of by all respectable employers, and so severely felt by our body. We again submit these regulations, and respectfully offer you our assistance in carrying them into effect.

"First—That we will not employ any boy but as an apprentice bound under a stamped indenture, which indenture will be entered on within one month after commencing work.

"Second—That we will not engage any boy for any term under six years' apprenticeship.

"Third—That we will not engage any boy under thirteen years' of age.

"Fourth—That we shall not engage any boy who has been at the trade formerly, without first communicating with his former master, and being satisfied with his previous servitude and conduct.

"Fifth—That the wages of apprentices be—

"For the first year	3*s.* per week.
"For the second year	4*s.* per week.
"For the third year	5*s.* per week.
"For the fourth year	6*s.* 6*d.* per week.
"For the fifth year	8*s.* per week.
"For the sixth year	10*s.* per week.

"Sixth—That we shall send a list of the apprentices in our employment to the secretary of the Operative House and Ship Painters' Society annually, or when required.

"There are various grievances which you, as well as our body, labour under, and which, by mutual co-operation, might be ameliorated or removed. We will be happy to meet any number of your body to arrange and adjust, so far as practicable, any matters connected with our common interests; and requesting your answer within ten days, we remain, on behalf of the Associated Operative House and Ship Painters of Glasgow and suburbs,

"Respectfully yours,
"ROBERT MURRAY, *President.*
"DONALD M'DONALD, *Secretary.*
"ALEX. M'TAGGART, *Treasurer.*

"PAINTERS' HALL, 34, HUTCHESON STREET, GLASGOW.
"29*th March*, 1859."

A large minority of masters refused, as had been concerted between them, to sign the agreement. They did not object to the rate of payment proposed in it, nor did they contemplate any departure from it, but they refused to bind themselves to any terms for a year. Therefore the men, on April 17th, proposed a conference; to this

the masters acceded; the men then asked that reporters might be present; this the secretary, without the authority of the masters, refused. Eventually the masters met alone, and sent word to the Association that they intended to abide by their resolution. So there was no conference, and the men struck about the 20th of April; and then, being anxious to procure publicity for their cause, laid the matter before the United Trades' Council. The Council desired to hear the other side, and requested the master painters to attend at a special meeting of the Council; some masters came, but declined to speak in the presence of any operative painters, on the ground that the operatives had, at the previous meeting, advocated their case in the absence of the masters. The operatives then withdrew, and the master painters had a fair hearing. A second meeting was then summoned for the 9th of May, and both parties were invited, but no masters came; nor did any come to a third meeting on May 15. The result was that the Trades' Council, who had first taken up the matter rather coldly, passed a resolution unanimously :—

"That after mature consideration of the causes which have led to the Operative Painters' strike, and the efforts which they have repeatedly made to arrange the matter with the employers (who have rejected their proposals), this meeting is of opinion that the objections urged against ratifying the annual contract of agreement are frivolous, and inconsistent with the social and commercial usages of the age; and that the operative painters' annual mode of settling their wages, and other working conditions of their trade, is well calculated to promote concord between employers and employed, and also to prevent unscrupulous parties from preying either on the honourably disposed employers or workmen."

And the Council proceeded to recommend the operative painters to public support. This appeal received a warm response; other trades contributed at the rate of £100 per week, and besides this there was an extra levy of 2*s.* 6*d.* per week on all members of the Association still in employ by the masters who did not object to sign the agreement. By this means the Association was enabled to pay aliment to the extent of 1*s.* 10*d.* per diem, or 11*s.* per week, to those on strike, in number about 200.

About the 25th of May, the masters proposed to refer the matter to neutral arbitration. On the 28th the operative painters met to consider this proposition, and came to the following resolutions:—

"1. That having experienced the beneficial effects of the annual mode of settling wages, &c., we consider that it should be retained.

"2. That it would promote the interests of the trade, if the master painters were to form a permanent Association, with an arbitration board, consisting of an equal number of employers and journeymen, from their respective Societies, and a neutral chairman, mutually appointed, to decide and settle all trade disputes. By this arrangement we believe that strikes (so mutually destructive) would be entirely prevented.

"3. That as the feeling of most of those whose social position is

higher than the working classes, is adverse to workmen, whether they (the workmen) are right or wrong, and as the majority of employers have already agreed to the arrangements of last year, we respectfully decline, at the desire of a minority, to submit this special case to any so-called neutral party whom the Masters' Association might choose, and we see no probability of both Associations agreeing in the choice of an umpire.

"4. That, from the evidence before us, we conclude that the object of the associated employers was not self-protection but aggression, and as the strike is the natural result of this premeditated policy, we consider them in justice bound to pay all expenses incurred.

"5. That as we find that other trades as well as ours are in the custom of having the rate of wages fixed by mutual agreement, we decline at present to adopt any other method, but are willing to accept, as formerly, the signature of the chairman of the associated employers as binding for that body.

"6. That should a conference between the two Associations take place, the foregoing articles be the basis of the terms to be negotiated."

About the same time the operatives started a Co-operative Painting Company, the capital being £200, raised by forty shares of £5 each, and premises were taken and orders received.

Thus stood the strike on May 28, five weeks after its commencement. Information as to the close of it or as to the success of the Company has not been received.

The strike of the painters was the cause of a slight strike amongst the slaters. Two slaters were, in the absence of the painters on strike, set by their master to do painters' work, declined, and were at once dismissed. All the slaters in the same employ then struck. The masters then held a meeting, and, on the operatives' Association confessing that they ought to have given notice of their rule, that slaters do not do painters' work for master painters whose men are on strike, agreed to conform to the rule; the master took back the two men he had dismissed, and the others returned.

At the same time that the painters were on strike, they had a serious dispute with the gilders, who complained to the United Trades' Council that the painters improperly assumed the monopoly of doing certain gilding work, in which gilders were entitled to participate. The painters upheld their right to do their own gilding, for the reasons that painters had always been gilders in external and internal decorations; that gilding requires knowledge of painting, light and shade, &c.; and that, except in a few peculiar cases, gilders had not been accustomed to gild painters' work.

At the same time the painters limited their claim:—

1. To all gilding done on painted surfaces in interiors, including ceilings, cornices, walls, and woodwork; and corresponding parts in ship-work.

2. And to all gilding on the exterior, including sign boards, ornamental designs, railings, and the outside gilding of ships.

They expressly disavowed any claim to gild mere furniture, as mirror frames, picture frames, &c.

This defence seems to have been held quite satisfactory by the Trades' Council.

GLASGOW BAKERS.

[Materials:—Answers of a master baker to questions submitted to employers of labour; Rules of the Journeymen Bakers' Association of Scotland.]

THE Journeymen Bakers' Association of Scotland is divided into nineteen branches in different towns, but Glasgow is the seat of the central board, as the executive committee. Its object is stated to be "the attainment of the rights of the operatives, the protection of their interests, and their social elevation as a body in society." The entrance fee is from 2*s.* to 10*s.*, but for one who has worked out a formal apprenticeship 1*s.* only; the weekly contribution 2*d.* It must be remembered that in some respects journeymen bakers have, as compared with other operatives, great advantages. They have no broken time all the year through, no tools to purchase or repair, little wear and tear of clothes, and no risk of accident. Their business does not admit of piecework, they are paid therefore by the week. Their wages are nominally fixed by the Union at the uniform rate of 22*s.*, but in point of fact vary according to the skill of the workman from 18*s.* to 22*s.*; for the strike in 1857, to establish the uniform rate of 24*s.*, proved inoperative, partly by the yielding of many individual members of the Society, partly by the introduction into the trade of non-unionists. The rules provide that no member engage himself upon any other terms than a cash wage, or for a longer period than one week; that he receive the full amount of his wage at the end of each week, and that a week's warning be given on either side, and that the operative receive payment for all Fast days in lieu of "Sabbath day sponging." The hours of work are twelve per diem, meal hours included, practically from five A.M. to five P.M.; overtime work allowed only in cases of emergency; rate, up to seven P.M., time and a quarter payment, from seven P.M. to ten P.M., time and a half. No work after ten P.M. "Also each branch is to have a local law, sanctioned by the central board, fixing the rate of their jobbing pay—1st half-day, five A.M., 2nd, eleven A.M. No jobber is allowed to sponge unless he has been jobbing part of the previous day, without receiving one half day's pay."

In some respects the rules of this Society are peculiarly strict. No member may accept a situation, the character of which is unknown or doubtful, without first inquiring of the officers of the nearest branch. No member may work beside a non-member. (In associations of other trades this prohibition is limited to the case where members form a majority in the shop.) Apprentices are prohibited from boarding or lodging in the house of their employer, and

from commencing work before five A.M. All apprentices are to be bound for a period not less than five years, under a regular indenture, after a trial of one month; the expenses of indenture to be paid by the Association. The usual number is two apprentices to three journeymen, but this rule is not strictly kept.

LIVERPOOL TRADES.

JOINERS.

[Materials:—Rules of the Friendly Society of Operative House Carpenters and Joiners of Great Britain; Bye-laws of the Liverpool Lodge attached to the above Society; Answers in behalf of ditto to questions concerning Trades' Unions.]

THE Carpenters and Joiners are united into one Society, having forty-nine lodges in various towns of Great Britain, and the central seat of their government is Nottingham.

By these rules "a general strike" is defined to be a case where the strike has been authorized by the whole Union, or is against an infringement affecting a whole town. A "turn-out" is defined as a partial strike in a shop, and against some established or customary rule, or against reduction of wages to a particular member or members. No strike for advance of wages is to be made, nor notice of new privileges to be given to employers without the sanction of the lodges, nor is there to be any strike without an attempt having first been made to settle the matters of contention between employers and employed by an amicable negotiation. No lodge is allowed to strike for any new privilege at a time when the numbers already on strike exceed one for every fifty throughout the whole Society, save only where there is an attempt to reduce wages. Members on strike or turn-out, or members discharged on account of their connexion with the Union, or resisting a reduction of wages, receive half wages. Discharged officers of the Society receive full wages. This aliment is raised by the government secretary sending notice of a special levy *pro ratâ* upon all the lodges, who thereupon transmit their quota to the lodge for whom it is destined.

Provision is made for tramp members, and the Society makes good to members the loss of their tools by fire. There is also an Accident and Burial Fund in connexion with the Society. These funds are raised by extra levies. There is a penalty of not less than 2*s.* 6*d.* for disclosing the transactions of the Society to a non-society man, or for getting employment for a non-society man, whilst a member is unemployed.

Piecework is prohibited under a fine of not less than 21*s.*

The Liverpool Lodge, containing 254 members, is bound by these rules:—it also has bye-laws of its own; the only one which needs be noticed is rule 21, that any member having tools stolen, shall receive from the Society two-thirds of their value, and legal steps shall be taken to bring the offending party to justice.

Joiners are paid by the week, but at different rates according to degrees of skill of the operatives, the extremes differing 4*s.* one from the other. There is no rule that equal wages shall be paid for the

same kind of work: the present average rate is 26*s*. The number of hours' work is not fixed by rule, but only by custom. They are from six A.M. to six P.M., including two hours for meals, on five days of the week. On Saturday the men generally leave off at four, having made up the two odd hours by extra work on other days. The number of hours worked by joiners is greater at Liverpool than at any other town connected with the Union, except Carlisle.

At the Liverpool lodge, the entrance fee is 2*s*. 6*d*., the weekly contribution, 3*d*.; one-third of the weekly contributions is set aside for the sick fund, and is, if necessary, augmented by a special levy.

LIVERPOOL PAINTERS.

[Materials:—Answers on behalf of the Operative Painters' Association to the questions on Trades' Unions.]

The objects of this Association are, according to Rule 2, "To promote the interest of its members in procuring employment, to protect them in the due exercise of their rights and privileges as workmen, to mediate when necessary between the employer and his men for the furtherance of their common interests, and generally to promote the welfare and stability of the trade in accordance with 5 Geo. IV. c. 95, "An Act to Repeal the Laws relative to the Combination of Workmen." Besides this, a member has the free use of a club room, where masters leave orders for men to be employed; of a comfortable reading room during four months in winter, where a large number of London, Dublin, and local daily and weekly newspapers and periodicals are provided, and where the nucleus of a library has been lately formed. The widow or next of kin, on the death of a member, receives £5, and so does a member on the death of his wife.

The Association is independent, and can, if it choose, even conduct a strike at its own cost; but ordinarily the strike is undertaken only with the consent of the central executive, and at the cost of the common fund, raised by contributions of 1*d*. a week from each member, from all the societies composing the Painters' Alliance. This Alliance consists altogether of fifteen societies of painters from Manchester, Sheffield, Blackburn, Bury, Rochdale, Preston, Hyde, Heywood, Cheadle, Over Darwen, Stockport, Ashton, &c. The central executive, to which each constituent society sends delegates, meets annually in each town in succession. The Liverpool branch is also connected with the Trades' Guardian Association, which represents eighteen trades in Liverpool, including all the building trades; it numbers 101 members. The entrance fee is 2*s*. 6*d*.; and the weekly contribution 2*d*. No one is admitted except he produce satisfactory evidence of his having served a legal apprenticeship to the trade.

Piecework, as being the cause of bad work and bad wages, is prohibited; so, too, no engagement may be made for longer time than a week, and no sub-contract or middleman's work is allowed. This is otherwise in Glasgow, where painters' work is let out to "grainers," or middlemen—a practice, as the masters say, more profitable to

themselves, but entailing inferior work. The wages are by the hour = 4*s.* 4*d.* per diem, or 26*s.* weekly, during the summer, or 4*s.* per diem, and 24*s.* weekly, during the rest of the year. This is the minimum wage, fixed at a general meeting of the Society, and held binding upon all members working in Liverpool, or under Liverpool employers. There has been only one advance in wages during the last few years.

The hours of work, as fixed by Rule 30 of the Society, are in winter from daylight to dusk, and in summer ten hours, exclusive of meals. In practice, 10½ hours are worked daily, and a half-holiday taken on Saturday.

There is a rule—not universally enforced—that non-society men coming to work at a club shop, shall within five days join the Society or leave the shop; if not, the committee to take steps. Members are fined 5*s.* if they recommend for work non-members whilst members are on the non-employed list. This list is kept in the Society's room, and any employer can have his choice; if not, the men are sent to him by rotation. Also by Rule 31, the committee is empowered to fine a member 10*s.* upon complaint by the employer.

The rules as to apprentices are not strictly kept, viz., that there should be only one to six journeymen, that the apprentices should be legally bound for seven years, and should receive the regular apprentice wages.

LIVERPOOL SHIP-JOINERS.

[Materials:—Answers to the questions concerning Trade Unions; the Rules of the Liverpool Ship-joiners' Association; Rules of the Liverpool Ship-joiners' Friendly Society.]

SHIP-JOINERS are neither shipwrights nor carpenters, their employment is to make and fit up ships' cabins. The operatives' Association, which is not connected with any other, except the United Ship Trades' Association, was instituted in October, 1853, for the purpose of facilitating the means of obtaining and of affording every necessary information relative to the employment of its members, and for upholding the rights, interests, and privileges of the trade, in accordance with the Act of Parliament, 5 Geo. IV. cap. 95, entitled "An Act to Repeal the Laws relative to the Combination of Workmen," and agreeably with the constituted laws of the realm.

The number of members is about four hundred: the entrance money is £4 (half paid by instalments); the weekly contribution, 1*d.* The condition of entrance is, if the candidate is under forty-five, to be a member of the Ship-joiners' Friendly Society. The hours of labour are, in summer, ten hours, from six A.M. to six P.M., with two hours allowed for meals; in winter, from daylight to dusk, with one hour and a half allowed. This rule is enforced by the fine of 1*s.*

The rate of wages is fixed during the year at 5*s.* per day (before 1858, it was 6*s.*), and for all overtime at 1*s.* per hour. Piecework is prohibited, penalty for breach, 1*s.*

As to contract work, Rule 9 provides that lump work, by sub-contract be discontinued: but that this must not be considered as inter-

fering with the right of members to compete with non-members in taking original contracts from merchants or master shipwrights: but that at such contract work, under no consideration whatever, shall overtime be allowed to be worked so long as members of the Association are unemployed; also all members employed at such contract work shall have equal shares of the profits. Penalty to sub-contracting parties £1 per week, to members working for them 10*s.* per week.

Members are prohibited under the penalty of 1*s.* per diem from working with a member in arrears, or with non-members, where the members have the majority.

In this trade, but unconnected with the Association, is a Ship-joiners' Friendly Society, having for its object to provide for members and their families, in case of accidental death.

LIVERPOOL TAILORS.

[Materials:—Rules of the Liverpool Tailors' Institute; answers to the questions concerning Trades' Unions by a journeyman tailor.]

The Liverpool Tailors' Institute was established in 1850, with a view "to advance the interest of the trade, and to improve the moral, mental, and social condition of its members, by keeping before the public mind the demoralizing effects of Sunday labour, and the evil results of the 'Sweating System'; also to provide accommodation for the unemployed, and to establish a library, reading-room, school for cutting," &c.

The conditions of membership are to be a person of fair character, belonging to the trade, to pay 6*d.* as entrance fee, and a weekly contribution of 1*d.*

Tailoring, being a comparatively simple trade, is the resource of multitudes of distressed men and women who have nothing else to do. The work admits of being done at home, and the operative who engages himself upon these terms loses the benefit of the check which the presence of his fellows maintains upon the encroachments of the employer. In such a trade it must always be difficult to establish united action. Liverpool tailors are not an exception: the Institute is in a failing way; its numbers have fallen from five or six hundred to two hundred, whilst the total number of tailors in the town amounts to 1,800 men and 700 women. It is quite unable to enforce its rules. Unionists work freely with non-unionists; wages are paid by the piece, calculated at the number of hours the piece requires for production, but there is no price list; each shop has a different set of prices, which are studiously concealed by the masters, and which the operatives are deterred by fear of dismissal from making known. And so the minimum wage which the Institute stipulates for, namely 4½*d.* an hour for an operative of the first class, and 4*d.* for one of the second class, is not only not augmented, but is constantly reduced. The common method of reduction is for the employer to produce a garment, and say, "I had this made for 10*s.* 6*d.*; I cannot pay you 13*s.* 6*d.* for a similar article. You too must make

it for 10*s.* 6*d.*, or go elsewhere." The Society cannot prevent this: all it can do is to declare it dishonourable to work off the premises, and to remonstrate with employers who try to cut down wages. The twenty-fourth rule, which provides that all disputes arising between the employer and employed shall be submitted to a body of arbitrators, consisting of masters and men in equal proportions, is a dead letter.

So too the hours recognised in the rules as the working hours, namely from six A.M. to seven P.M., including one hour for dinner, are not observed: every shop in Liverpool keeps longer hours. The Benefit Society was formerly limited to the members of the Institute: but now all tailors are freely admitted.

This Institute is distinguished from other ordinary Trade Unions in three particulars.

1. It solicits the accession of masters. Rule 24 prescribes that master tailors may become members by subscribing annually not less than the amount subscribed by the workmen, or honorary members by an annual contribution of not less than 10*s.*

2. It contemplates the possibility of being not an entirely self-supporting Society. By the twenty-sixth rule the secretary is empowered to solicit subscriptions and donations from master tailors, and the clergy and gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood, towards the support of the Institute. A half-guinea annual subscription constitutes the payer an honorary member.

3. By the twenty-second rule the Institute guarantees to all employers connected with it the efficiency of its members as workmen, and guarantees to make good all work spoiled through negligence, provided *all* the men in the employ are *bonâ fide* members of the Institute. This rule is stated to have been observed by the Institute for some time, but, the masters having disregarded the condition that they should not employ non-unionists, it has ceased to be observed.

ENGLISH (ESPECIALLY STAFFORDSHIRE) MINERS.

EVIDENCE given before this Committee of a member of the National Council of Miners, appointed to watch Parliamentary proceedings in relation to the Mining Act, by the conference of the Mining Trade held at Leeds.

"I am not favourable to the principal objects of trade societies as at present constituted. I consider that the masters, from their greater wealth, have much more power in regulating the rate of wages than the men; and I observe that the workmen are not disposed to contribute to the funds of the trades' unions except during periods of a considerable depression of trade, or when they are about to strike for some object connected with their work; but that when wages and work are abundant, they contribute little or nothing towards the funds of trade societies. I also think that trade societies, as at present constituted, devote their attention far too much to the mere question of wages; they concern themselves far too little with the

improvement of the intelligence, morals, and general condition of the workmen connected with them. The policy of the trade societies when thus confined to the mere question of wages seems to me narrow and short-sighted ; and I have no faith that, thus restricted, any great and permanent advantage can be obtained by the working classes, unless expedients be adopted by trades' unions, which may be slow in their operation, but which would have a tendency to raise the moral and intellectual condition of the whole mass of the workmen. The narrowness, selfishness, and shortsightedness of the objects of trades' unions, seem to me to be in a great degree dependent on the characters of the leaders by whom they are guided. These men are often not only incompetent to seek other objects, but likewise the majority of them are selfish and immoral. They make a speculation of their office, as leaders of the strikes ; and I could give many instances (from twenty years' experience) of men who have for years supported themselves by the constant recurrence of strikes which they themselves have promoted or got up. I have been myself, in a great number of instances, instrumental in putting an end to such strikes, by exposing the motives and characters of the persons whose interest it was, and who were endeavouring to get them up. One strong reason why men of a low moral character become leaders of the trades' unions is, certainly, the imperfect condition of knowledge and morality among the masses of the working people, especially in South Staffordshire: but I should say that the members of trades' unions are, as respects the whole body of the working classes in South Staffordshire certainly far superior, as regards their morality, to those who are not connected with the trades' unions. I am not connected with any Society.

"Of late years such objects as the limiting the number of apprentices, and that class of interferences with the internal regulations of the trade, have become less common; and trades' unions have been more and more confined to the simple questions of wages, and the hours of labour as connected with wages, between master and servant.

"I have known many instances in which trades' unions have been successful, by their proceedings being peacefully carried out. I was aware of the whole of the circumstances connected with the strike of the miners in Staffordshire, in 1858. That strike lasted nineteen weeks, ending in the latter end of October: and I believe that the masters had determined to permit the men to come back to their work with some advantage in a fortnight more, when certain of the leaders, to whom I have previously alluded, and who are men of bad character and low intelligence, induced the men to go in for three weeks, under a pledge to one another to come out again after they had refreshed themselves, and continue the strike. Thus the whole object of the nineteen weeks' strike failed by the indiscretion of the leaders; there were no regular trades' unions connected with this strike. After this experience, the South Staffordshire miners began paying to the amalgamated fund for the objects of the petition to Parliament, to enable them to watch the course of legis-

lation with respect to the regulation of the mines, and the social improvement of the miners, and the shortening of the hours of labour, and the education of the boys. The Amalgamated Society of Miners had first in view certain of the objects common to Benefit and Insurance Societies; it also included a labour fund, which was to be available in case of a strike among the miners, and towards which fund contributions were separately given. This Miners' Amalgamated Society held a conference at Ashton, in May, 1858; and I and another delegate from South Staffordshire were deputed to attend this conference on behalf of the miners of South Staffordshire. At that meeting of the conference, the working miners adopted a resolution in favour of a petition to Parliament, for a charge of one farthing per ton upon all coal raised from the mines, to be employed in the education of the children of the miners; likewise for regulations in the mines to prevent accidents, and to promote good ventilation and the comfort of the miners when at work, the shortening of the hours of the labour of the children, and the complete exclusion of women from work on the banks of the mines. These last objects relating to the education, and the morality, and social improvement of the miners, and their protection when at work, have formed the main practical objects of this amalgamated society. The labour fund has not yet been brought into practical operation generally. In the Barnsley district, and in Yorkshire, generally, this fund has, however, been practically brought to bear upon strikes, and has secured to the miners a regulation in those districts, limiting their labour to eight hours. A trades' union, constituted in the way I have thus described, in my opinion differs so materially from that which does not include the whole of those objects, that I have no doubt such a trades' union would tend greatly to improve the condition of the miners in all respects. The funds of the Amalgamated Miners' Association are audited by persons appointed at the annual conference for that purpose.

The Miners' Amalgamated Society is governed by a council elected annually at the conference. In connexion with the Branch Union, at Staveley, in Derbyshire, there is a co-operative store established: this was done about twelve months ago, and it is working prosperously; selling all kinds of provisions, including meat. The shareholders are about to erect a shop for the sale of the provisions. I have recommended to the several trades' unions in my district, that, when they have any funds in hand, they should not put them into a bank, but that they should rather lend them out to the several co-operative stores and building societies in their neighbourhood: because, in the first place, they would obtain a better rate of interest from such societies than from a bank; and in the second place, they would thus be promoting the success of institutions which have a beneficial influence on the well-being of the operatives. The prevalence of strikes is very much promoted by the sensual condition of the working miners: and this degradation is brought about to a very great degree by the system of employment under

'Butties,' who require them to spend a large portion of their earnings in public-houses in which the Butties are interested. The low condition of the miners' families is, also, to a great extent, brought about by the employment of women on the banks of mines, who are not only withdrawn from domestic duties, but are exposed to coarse and immoral associations. The language used on these banks, not merely in the presence of the women, but by the women themselves, is most disgusting. The regulations enforced by the Butties among the workmen of South Staffordshire include a contribution for what is called 'foot' ale and 'drink' ale, which even men who are members of teetotal societies are compelled to pay, though they absolutely abstain; and, when such men refuse to go to the public-house to receive their wages, they are yet, notwithstanding that, forced to contribute to a drunken spree which the rest of the men indulge in on such occasions. The 'Butty' and the 'Doggy' receive some countenance, in forcing this contribution on the sober men, from the drunken men, who submit to it more cheerfully. When the men are turned out from the Saturday night's spree, at the division of wages, I have myself seen, close to my own house and shop, early on the Sunday morning, as many as six or eight battles among the men infuriated by drink: that is quite a common thing at all these places. The masters complain very much indeed of what they call 'drunken Monday;' but this drunkenness on Monday is, to a very great extent indeed, the fault of the Butties and Doggies, who endeavour to keep the men drinking from Saturday on, and over part of Monday. If the men are inclined to go to work on the Monday, the Butty men frequently come to the pit at eleven o'clock, or one or two o'clock, and say 'Now, lads, knock off;' and many men leave their work, and come out of the pit: and on such occasions, when the men thus leave their work, it is called a 'build-house' for the first two hours and a half, and for these two hours and half they get no wages. Then, if they work from six in the morning to eleven or twelve o'clock in the morning, for that they receive only a quarter; and the general rule in Staffordshire is, that half a day is accounted to be from six o'clock in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon, without any stoppage for meals; and if men go down to the pit on a Monday, they are not allowed to work excepting under this rule;—that is, they are required to work from six in the morning to two o'clock in the afternoon, and they must not work any longer; and that is accounted half a day; whereas a whole day consists of work from six o'clock in the morning until six o'clock in the evening, also without any dinner hour. A deputation from the miners of the Willenhall district waited on the masters at Wolverhampton, about four months ago, to represent these grievances to them, and the masters promised to remedy the complaints as to the time; but I am not aware that they have taken any steps to do so.—There are, perhaps, 50,000 miners in the district in which the Butty system exists."

CHESHIRE AND LANCASHIRE SALTMAKERS AND MINERS.

[Materials:—Answers by the Treasurer of the Association of the Lancashire and Cheshire Saltmakers and Miners to the questions concerning Trade Unions.]

THIS Association consists of from 900 to 1000 miners, and from 200 to 300 saltmakers. For ordinary purposes it is not connected with any other society, but at present, for the special object of improved legislation respecting mines, it is co-operating with the miners of Scotland, Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Yorkshire, Northumberland, and Durham. It consists of branch societies. Once a fortnight there is held a county meeting, to which each branch society sends one delegate; and twice a year there is a conference, to which each branch society sends two or three delegates. No meetings are held which are either secret or not open to all members of the Union, and to reporters if they choose to attend. There are no rules but those which are printed. One general agent is constantly employed by the Association, at 4*s.* per diem (*i. e.* full wages), and the other officers receive a slight remuneration. A balance-sheet is issued every month, and a copy supplied to each branch society. The entrance money is 6*d.*, and the fortnightly contribution 1*d.*; but extra contributions are raised when required—at present 1*d.* extra per fortnight is being raised to defray the parliamentary expenses—and in time of a strike the extra levy amounts to 2*d.* and 3*d.*, or more. It is not the custom to keep a large accumulated fund. The cash in hand at present is about £20.

As to the effect of the Association upon the skill of the workman, it is stated that no test of efficiency is applied previous to the admission of a member, or in time of a strike. All hands are alike supported: but no aid is given to a man discharged for incompetence.

As to the effect upon the men themselves, this is stated to depend upon the leaders for the time being of the Union, and also upon the general character of the district. The sort of men chosen for leaders is represented to have greatly improved during the last twenty years; they are no longer bitter or mischievous, as they used to be, but have reasonable designs. At Ashton, Dukinfield, and Oldham, the men are of steady habits, and the Society has been organized for twelve years; at St. Helens and Oldham, on the other hand, the men are of a lower grade: 'drunken Monday,' with overwork for the rest of the week, is a recognised custom, and the Union has been broken up five or six times in the last few years.

As to the necessity of an association, it is stated that there are two classes of masters,—one, those who are anxious to give fair wages to their men, the other, those who will not do so until compelled; also that there is no instance of a general rise of wages without the interference of the Society.

Saltmakers and miners are paid both by the piece and by the day. The rate of wages for piecework varies remarkably throughout the district, according to the nature of the work which has to be done,

the thickness of the mines, and other considerations; but the custom of the district is to regulate the piecework, upon the understanding that the men who are working by the day shall receive 4*s.* per diem for their work, and that the men who are working by the piece shall at least be enabled, in the various kinds of work, to earn 4*s.* by a fair day's work. But the firemen receive only 21*s.* per week; and in the neighbourhood of Bolton wages vary according to the circumstances, from 3*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* or 3*s.* 9*d.* per diem; and where the workmen are supplied, as they are on some estates, with cheap cottages with land attached, the day wages are even as low as 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem. "On one particular estate," says the treasurer, "in which the day wages are 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem, the arrangements as to the education of the children, the conveniences in the cottages and gardens, the regulations as to the ventilation of the mines, and the comforts of the miners are such, that I have frequently said, 'I had rather work in such mines for 6*d.* a day less, than in other mines at the ordinary rate.'" No objection is made by the Association to piecework ordinarily; but it is otherwise with respect to the employment of workmen as contractors for the getting of coal, because these generally employ inferior men at lower wages, and that has a tendency to reduce the rate of wages for piecework. The men resist this practice by remonstrances of the Association to the masters, and it has been a grievance which has from time to time caused great irritation and misunderstanding, and has been among the causes leading to strikes.

There is no general custom limiting the hours of labour, except that in particular pits the men have applied to the masters to allow them a half day on Saturday, such as is obtained in factories, and this has been conceded. There is, however, some control exercised as to the amount of work to be done in a single day. There is a general understanding between the employer and the employed, that a certain number of tubs of coal makes a day's work; the employer expects each man to get as much, and the workmen do not like any man to get more. If a man were to get more, his fellow-workmen would remonstrate with the overlooker of the pit; if this failed, they would probably appoint a deputation of two miners to wait on the employer, and as a last resort (instances have occurred), they would strike, until either the employer or the man submitted. In other cases they would levy a fine upon the man of 6*d.* for the extra quantity of coal he had got. In some of the district lodges a rule has existed, that a man should forfeit to the lodge all the extra wages earned by extra work; but it is doubtful whether such a rule any longer exists.

There is in this trade an organization of masters, but this body holds no communication with the men's Association.

A Lancashire coal master informs us that the leaders of the Union are, without one exception, bad workers and interested men, and that they corrupt the apprentices. Also that he has found unionists to be unsteady workmen, and to insist on the uniform wage.

SCOTTISH MINERS.

[Materials:—Answers to the questions concerning Trades' Unions by the Secretary to the Scottish Miners' Association; Official Report on the Mining Districts, 1856, by Mr. Tremenheere.]

The Scottish Miners' Association was founded in 1852. Its original object, as stated in its rules, was the protection of miners' rights and privileges. This is explained to be the prevention of a reduction of wages by providing a fund for the support of men out of work, as is the ordinary case with other trades' unions. Its objects, however, are now expanding, and include, amongst other things, the establishment of co-operative stores to supersede truck shops, an improvement in legislation with respect to mines, the formation of a General Insurance Society for miners, and the redress of several miscellaneous grievances. The Association is composed of local societies, each holding its own money, and remitting only what may be required to cover the necessary expenses of the general Association. There is a central executive consisting of three persons, which, when any circumstances render combined action necessary, summons a meeting of the representatives of the local societies to a conference, and the decisions of that conference guide the action of the whole Association. The entrance money is 6*d.*, and the weekly contribution 1*d.* As to strikes, the rule (No. 4) is that "if at any time the work or workmen therein find it necessary to strike for an advance of wages, or from any other necessary cause, the district committee shall refer the matter to a working arbitration. Should the masters refuse this, the men to be supported till the matter is adjusted. Should the men refuse it, they place themselves beyond the pale of the Association." Any local society may separately strike for wages, provided it makes no claim upon the general fund collected from the whole Association, the application of the general fund being regulated only by the conference; the Society has no rule to prevent its members working with non-unionists; does not, as the Association thinks, "unfortunately," put any restriction on the hours of labour, nor does it fix any minimum wage; "wages vary according to the nature, quality, and severity of the work." As to the restriction of the "day" or amount of "get" in a day, which by Mr. Tremenheere is pronounced to be the master-evil of Lanarkshire, it is stated that it was formerly a common custom, and that it still prevails in a few collieries, but in a few only, and that the Miners' Association steadily discountenances it. Members are expelled from the Association if they commit an offence against the law of the land. The Association has means of ascertaining whether work is slack or brisk in different parts of the country, through the columns of the *Glasgow Sentinel*. The meetings of the Society used to be held in public-houses; now places are preferred near which no strong liquor is sold, and no person is permitted to enter in a state of intoxication. The discussion takes place with open doors, the representatives of the various papers are invited to attend, and the proceedings are regularly reported in a newspaper supported by the miners.

The miners appeal to the history of their trade as the strongest proof that without association a fair wage cannot be expected. "In my experience of thirty years in the mines," says their representative, "I am not aware in all the fluctuations, and in Scotland they are very great, of more than three instances where a rise of wages has been obtained, unless by men getting on the defensive." Their first Union was organized in 1835, and in 1836 there was a rise without a strike. In 1837 a reduction was made from 5*s.* to 4*s.* per diem ; a strike took place, but new hands were imported, and the Society was extinguished. From 1837-1842 there was no society, the prices of iron and coal were nearly double what they are now, wages were reduced to 2*s.* 6*d.* per diem, and even to 1*s.* 8*d.* In 1842, wages being still very low, the Society was re-organized, and the men applied to the masters to refer the rate of wages to the arbitration of the Commissioners of Supply for the county of Lanarkshire ; the masters declined, the men then reluctantly struck, and the result was a rise from 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* per diem of wages all over the country. From 1842-1844 the wages held good, times were prosperous, and the men, thinking there was no need of a society, ceased to support it. In 1844 wages fell, and the Society was revived; wages then rose, and for three years they kept high, and the Society, as before, was left to decline. The representative of the miners goes on to say that from 1847 to 1850 wages remained low, and were only restored in 1850 by an agitation on the part of the men, and that since then they have remained high. He omits however any reference to the great strike of 1847, mentioned by Mr. Tremenheere, in which the men, after standing out fourteen weeks for 5*s.* a day, accepted the masters' terms of 3*s.* a day, which in a few weeks were reduced to 2*s.* a day. And though he refers to the strike of 1856 to prove the absence of intimidation, he abstains from allusion to its causes or result. These, according to Mr. Tremenheere, were as follows : "In November, 1855, the men forced the masters into granting an advance of from 4*s.* to 5*s.* a day. Many of the masters, since they could not afford to continue that rate, before long felt obliged to take their stand against it, and to reduce the rate again to 4*s.* A strike took place : it became general throughout the districts concerned at the beginning of March, and after from 30,000 to 40,000 men had been idle for sixteen weeks, and had inflicted enormous loss upon their masters and the public, and great suffering upon themselves and their families, the event proved that they were again wrong, for they resumed work at their masters' terms."

As a proof that the Association promotes the efficiency of workmen, it is stated that under the regulations of the Association, no lad is permitted to enter the trade unless he put himself for a twelvemonth under the direction of a skilled workman. Where these regulations are observed, as in the counties of Clackmannan, Fife, Mid- and East-Lothian, and in some parts of Ayrshire, a sensible diminution of accidents has followed. In Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Linlithgowshire, and a considerable part of Ayrshire,

where these regulations cannot be enforced, accidents are more frequent.

With regard to the effect of the Association upon the moral character of the workmen, it is stated that no "picketing of pits" is allowed, nor are weekly "black lists" published, and that any warnings against individuals supposed to be hostile to the Association, that may be made at any public meeting, are not made with the sanction of the executive; and generally that the tendency of the trades' association is more and more to adopt moral expedients, and so far from resorting to any form of physical force and intimidation, to repudiate it. The secretary of the Association would be the first person to give notice to the police, if he suspected that any overt act of violence was likely to take place, and he has frequent applications from the police, when at any time they are anxious to ascertain the accuracy of reports which may be afloat with respect to dangers of this description. Acts of violence during strikes have become much rarer of late; and in particular during the strike in 1856, when 30,000 men were out of employ, no one was imprisoned for violence or intimidation. The result of this moderation on the part of the men has shown itself in a corresponding feeling on the part of the masters, who as a rule, after a strike is over, bear no malice, and abstain from, what was formerly a common practice, the issuing of a warning to their neighbours not in future to employ those who had conducted or taken part in the strike.

Mr. Tremenheere, in speaking of the colliers four years ago, gives a very different account. He states that, in the strike of 1856, a new and serious feature presented itself, viz. the exercise of intimidation on a large scale, yet in such a manner as to escape the letter of the law. "In many instances," he says, "the tactics of the men on strike were to assemble suddenly in large numbers before some large colliery some miles distant from their own, at the time when the colliers were going to work, and placing themselves across their path, either to obstruct the way altogether, or to ask the men in a civil and friendly tone 'whether they were not going to attend the colliers' meeting on that day?' or some other equally simple question, in neither case using any actual violence, nor even menacing expressions." This "passive intimidation" was applied to prevent not only men who were ready to work at the reduced wages, but those who were working at the full wages demanded by the Union, and he attributes this conduct to the greater completeness of the organization of the men. He also speaks of the demoralization which is found to follow any considerable strike.

The special grievances of which miners complain are as follows:

1. The law of master and servant.
2. Ill education of children.
3. The absence of a fair system of weighing.
4. Ill ventilation of mines,
5. The improper carrying out of the clause in the Truck Act legalizing deductions from wages.
6. Truck.

Miners express themselves dissatisfied that their obligation to their employer should be enforced by imprisonment, whilst his obligation to them is enforced only by damages, and too frequently the magistrate on the bench who decides these questions is himself a colliery owner.

Education, they think, should be made compulsory; children should not be entrusted with responsible duties unless they have attended school. Ignorant miners are found to be reckless and dangerous miners.

Miners are paid by piecework, so much for every tub of material they send up; the tub to be of full weight and proper quality, otherwise the payment for it is either reduced, or forfeited altogether, according to the law of the particular colliery. In most collieries, the banksman, the servant of the coal-owner, who stands at the head of the pit, is sole judge of both weight and quality. It is easy to see how under such a system, however fairly carried out, dissatisfaction arises. The paper before me states "We may go down and put up what we believe to be a good day's work, and at the end not have a pennyworth of wage, the whole having been condemned in the view by the middleman (or banksman): this same material, so condemned, may be afterwards sold to the public, and the profit taken by our employer." On this subject the following paper has been brought under the attention of the House of Commons:

"MINES' INSPECTION BILL.

"A FAIR SYSTEM OF WEIGHING.

"The following statements, from a few of the best-regulated Collieries, show, as we think, the necessity of 'A Fair System of Weighing the Miners' Material' being made compulsory by Legislative Enactment, viz.—

WOMBWELL MAIN COLLIERY, YORKSHIRE.

A Correct Account of the *Actual Weight* of Coals got and sent out of the above Colliery by Six steady Working Colliers, in the Fortnight ending April 11th, 1860. Also, showing the *Weight paid for*, and the *Loss* to the Workmen, by the present system. These men send Twenty-one to the Score, and Twenty-one Hundredweight to the Ton.

	Tubs sent. (10½ cwt. each.)	Tubs paid for.	Tubs not paid for.
SAMPSON ELLIS	196	186	10 or 105 cwt.
H. ADDAMS	239	230	9 " 96 "
THOS. BRIGGS	211	210	10 " 105 "
MICHAEL SICTEBOTTOM	239	228	11 " 115½ "
M. LITTLEWOOD	216	207	9 " 94½ "
J. SHIRES	234	225	9 " 94½ "

Showing a loss to the above six working men, at the above colliery, to be in the aggregate 20 tons, 10½ cwt., which, at 1*s.* 2*d.* per ton, amounts to £1 7*s.* 3*d.*, or 4*s.* 6½*d.* per man, for the fortnight.

"The following case of a colliery where the men forfeited, or had tubs condemned, is from Woodhall Colliery, in the county of Lanark.

We may state that the undernoted is only a tithe of what might have been stated had the whole of the men been allowed to make a statement. The term used by the middleman or pithead man is, the hutch or tub is 'hanged'; and so it is, as the miner gets nothing for such hutches or tubs.

"PETER STEVENSON, miner, Woodhall, says—'On the 28th of March, 1850, two of my hutches were hanged.' HUGH BLACKBURN says—'On the 10th of March, two of my hutches were hanged.' JOHN HUME says—'On the 9th of March, I lost, or had hanged, six hutches (a whole day's work.)' 'From the 18th of February to the 18th of March,' says COLIN BURNE, 'I had six hutches hanged.' 'On the 9th of March,' says JAMES JARVIE, 'I lost, or had hanged, two hutches.' 'On Monday, the 12th of March,' says WILLIAM HAMILTON, 'I had three hutches hanged.' JOHN LITTLE says—'During my last fourteen days' pay, I lost five hutches, and this one I am to lose four, or that is what is already hanged.' JOHN STEWART says—'Three years ago, in this colliery, I lost, or had hanged, 14*s.* 6*d.* worth of coals in three weeks, and, because I said it was a shame, I was discharged."'

This evil admits of an obvious remedy: the weight can at all times be ascertained exactly, by the simple process of erecting a steelyard on the pithead, and weighing every hutch. This, states Mr. Tremenheere, is common in Fifeshire and the Lothians, and is practicable in all cases. The quality cannot be subjected to so sure a test, but in many collieries the miners are represented at the pithead by a man, whom they pay and whom they call their justice-man, and whose duty is to check the proceedings of the banksman. The petition to Parliament includes a prayer that this practice should be made imperative in all collieries.

Mr. Tremenheere refers to this grievance of the miners, but chiefly with a view to show that it is rather a fictitious than a real one. He gives instances of collieries where the judgment of the banksman has been found to be more lenient towards the men than the rigid accuracy of the scales. He states also that in nearly every case where they require it, the miners are allowed at their own expense to have a "justice-man:" but that they rarely continue one long in their employ, finding the institution a useless expense.

The miners also complain of the ill ventilation of their mines, and allege that this defect arises from two causes; one, the ignorance of the principles of ventilation on the part of those who manage the mines; the other, the parsimony of the employers.

Another complaint is, that the deductions from their wages for medical attendance, sharpening of tools, schooling, &c., are not satisfactorily expended. The men have no control over the choice of the medical attendant, of the blacksmith, or the teacher, and sometimes persons incompetent and objectionable are appointed. This is especially the case with Roman Catholic miners. The master, a Protestant, appoints a Protestant teacher; the men, if they wish to send their children to a Catholic school, have to pay over again. Further, the

funds raised by the deductions from wages are not always properly accounted for. An instance is given (and like cases are stated to be not uncommon among the iron masters of Lanarkshire and Ayrshire), where these deductions for schooling amounted to £303, and the sums actually expended only to £115, the balance, £188, being appropriated by the firm.

The last, and chief complaint is the maintenance of the truck system. The representative of the Miners' Association states as follows:—"Of the mining counties in Scotland, there is in Clackmannan no truck shop; in Mid- and East-Lothian one; in Fifeshire three; in Stirlingshire a few; in Renfrewshire they are beginning to be established; in Linlithgowshire there is a truck shop to nearly every colliery. The truck shops provide all articles of subsistence and clothing, with one exception, drink. The Truck Act renders it necessary for the masters to have a separate pay-office. But this office they take care shall be close to the truck shop, sometimes it is separated only by a partition. They pay the men at the long interval of a fortnight, or even of a month, and in the meantime allow them upon application subsistence money from day to day, or even on the half-day. This subsistence money, the miner is practically compelled, by penalties, to carry to the truck shop; for if not, the subsistence allowance is stopped, and he must wait for his pay till the end of the fortnight or month; or he is shifted to a less favourable part of the mine, or he is altogether dismissed. Dismissal has indeed become more common under the new system of employment, which has substituted for a contract of fourteen days, a contract terminable at a day's notice. To such an extent is truck carried, that even if the truck shop has not in store the articles required, the miner is not supplied with cash, which he might lay out where he would, but with tokens which certain shopkeepers in the town will recognise, and on receiving them supply articles, to the extent of the value of the tokens. These tokens however have afterwards to be returned by the shopkeepers to the truck shop to be exchanged into cash, and the rate of exchange is a deduction of 3*s.* in every 20*s.* in favour of the truck shop. This loss, amounting to 15 per cent., the shopkeeper has of course taken care has already fallen upon the miner." Single men are said to be able to escape this system, because they need less subsistence money, and can live the next month upon their savings of the present month; but men with families are the victims; in certain collieries, at dull periods of the year, many men are described as not seeing Her Majesty's coin of the realm for weeks together, and the Truck Act as altogether set aside.

It is further stated that the masters have a common fund to resist the action of the miners' Association, and especially to defend individual masters in all prosecutions for breaches of the Truck Act, or for other offences against the laws regulating the management of mines.

These prosecutions occur almost weekly in Scotland, and hitherto have aggravated the evil they are intended to diminish; for one effect

of them is that the masters who own truck shops keep fewer hands to manage them, and this in practice produces demoralizing habits among the men. "Week after week," it is stated, "in all these large truck shops, you will find at one o'clock in the morning, at two, at three, and from that on, persons surrounding the shop door, the old worn-out stager, and the child of tender years, all huddling together, waiting till that store door opens; for, to be served at all, it is necessary to take up one's turn at that early hour."

On the other hand, Mr. Tremenheere in his report of the state of the mines in 1856, says "the truck system has again been denounced by the delegates, and represented as a grievance;"—language that leaves the impression that in his opinion there was not much real suffering arising therefrom. And generally his inquiries have led him to adopt views entirely opposed to those upheld by the Mining Association. "Questions of wages and any alleged grievance that may at the moment occupy the thoughts of the workpeople are," he writes, "always best settled by the workmen and their employers without the intervention of delegates or any other extraneous interference." And he gives the instance of the successful operation for thirty years of a society based on opposite principles, viz. the Govan Colliery Friendly and Free Labour Society, founded by Mr. Dixon in 1826, the rules of which every one of his colliers, in number (in 1856) 310, is required to subscribe.*

A few particulars of this Society may here be given. The preamble of these rules states that "The workmen of Govan Colliery, deeply impressed with a sense of the evil effects of combination to restrict free labour, have resolved to form themselves into a friendly and free-labour society, for the purpose of supporting each other when visited by sickness or accident, and for their legal and individual interests." The third rule is, "that no collier or other person employed shall interfere in any manner of way with the employer's just right of employing, retaining, and discharging such workmen as may be considered proper, or with a workman's right of working and engaging to work in the way, upon the terms, and with whom he may think best for the interest of himself and family."

The Society, together with a funeral fund, and a school fund, subscription to which is compulsory, and a library and reading-room, is managed by a master court, consisting of a president, treasurer, clerk, and thirteen managers, of whom three are named by the owner of the colliery. The Society seems to be most successful, and the owner of the colliery liberal and considerate.

With regard to strikes, Mr. Tremenheere adopts the classification given him by the employers, that one-third of the miners are steady

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* Since this paper was written, information has been received that in the early part of the present year the operatives of the Govan Colliery Friendly and Free Labour Society struck. No particulars however have come to hand, but that an object of the strike was to procure the same rate of wages as that paid at a neighbouring colliery.

men opposed to strikes; one-third, ignorant disorderly men who are always most ready to believe that they are unfairly dealt with by their employers, and to follow any extreme course that agitators and delegates may suggest; and the remaining third, men who are not dissatisfied with their employers, but who from want of moral courage allow themselves to be banded together by the delegates or leaders, and mixed up in every action of hostility against their masters, and in every transgression of the law, with the worst portion of their fellow-workmen. He contrasts the strikes in Lanarkshire and Ayrshire with the refusal of the miners in Fifeshire, Alloa, Clackmannan, and the Lothians to join in them, and assigns as the cause of the indisposition to strikes "the fact that society is older and more settled in the latter named districts than in the former, that the proportion of ignorant and turbulent characters is less, that a large number of the collieries are or have been worked by the proprietors themselves, who have looked more closely into everything which affects the condition, or influences the feelings of the workpeople, and placed these matters upon a more satisfactory footing."

Mr. Tremenheere also has no doubt upon which side the rights of these disputed questions lie. Of the masters he says, "Notwithstanding the language in which interested men, who assume to speak for their class as delegates, indulge in regard to the employers generally in that part of the country, there are among these employers, as I willingly testify from having been conversant with these districts for upwards of thirteen years, gentlemen who have as accurate a knowledge of the real condition and feelings of the workmen, and as sincere a desire to deal justly by them, and to benefit them, as are to be found in any part of the kingdom." And again: "I am aware that it is only with much caution and reservation that it can be becoming in me to offer any suggestion to gentlemen of the ability, experience, and good intentions of those who preside over the great industrial establishments in question." And of the leaders of the Association he writes, "Unfortunately, as matters have hitherto been, the moment these questions arise they are seized upon by delegates or agitators, who are neither the best disposed, the most temperate, nor the most enlightened of the class to which they belong, and whose direct interest it is to aggravate every existing cause of dispute, and to bring forward as many others as can be made available." And again he says that "the masters very naturally refuse to submit their case to the kind of men usually acting as delegates:" and he speaks of "a delivery of the well-disposed and the intelligent among the workmen from the thraldom so often imposed upon them, against their better judgments, by the ignorant, the rash, and the malevolent;" and of the present Miners' Association, then about to be established, as "an organization among a certain class of the men under the guidance of their delegates, which will be fruitful in future strikes." And after quoting at length the four first rules of the Association, which in substance have been given above, he closes his report in the following words:—

on unemployed members, *i.e.*, by way of donation to members and travellers, is nearly £150. There is also a sick fund attached to the Society.

The Auxiliary Fund is expressed to be established for the relief of members in case of oppression, and the rules for its application are as follows :—

"That should an attempt be made unnecessarily to reduce the wages of any of the members, or to increase their hours of labour unjustly, stop their wages, impose an unreasonable amount of work, introduce a superfluous number of boys, or by any other grievance oppress them; they must, in the first place, solicit their employer or foreman for relief from such grievance, and if the result of such application be unfavourable, the said member or members shall then apply to the president or secretary of their branch, who shall call a committee or general meeting to inquire into the case.

"That in no case whatever shall the member or members working under such employer have a vote or voice any further than in giving evidence on the case of such grievance. [The Society of Iron Founders is, so far as I know, the only society where this rule exists.]

"That the meeting shall have full power to send delegates, if necessary, to settle the business; when, if the matter cannot be amicably settled, the secretary of the branch where the grievance takes place shall then write to the corresponding secretary, and acquaint him with all the particulars of the case; and this correspondence shall be signed by the president and referee, or shall not be considered legal. The corresponding secretary shall immediately lay the same before the executive committee. The executive committee shall immediately send delegates to investigate the grievance, if they consider the case demands a delegation; and should they from the report received from their delegates, consider such complaint well founded, they shall have full power to allow the relief as prescribed in the laws of the Society, after the men have given legal notice to their employers. But no relief shall be allowed except in case of extreme necessity, and the executive committee shall have full power to re-open any foundry that has been closed against the members, when they find or think it necessary.

"That should the members of any branch or foundry leave their employment without having first obtained the sanction of the executive committee, such members shall not be entitled to the allowance provided in cases of oppression, except in cases where the employer forces such terms upon members as they are bound not to accept, and where consequently they have to leave for non-compliance.

"That no members shall be entitled to the benefit of the auxiliary fund for the stoppage of wages, unless they have taken a legal course to obtain such wages.

"That the auxiliary fund shall not be applied for any other purposes than those specified, except to preserve a reasonable advance of wages in a low paid district.

"That the allowances to members oppressed shall be

To a man	10*s.*	per week for four weeks.
To a wife	2*s.*	
For each child ...	1*s.*	

"That after four weeks, if the oppression still continues, the allowances for the wife or children shall continue for eight weeks longer, and the member shall receive such donative allowance (from the General Fund) as the date of his entrance entitles him to.

"In all cases these benefits cease upon the members obtaining work.

"That when a case of oppression takes place in any branch, the secretary of such branch shall, once a month, send a full return of the amount of income and expenditure, and to whom, and for what paid, with the number of members on the Auxiliary Benefit, their wives and children, and all other necessary information to the corresponding secretary: and the corresponding secretary shall, for the information of the members, publish a yearly Report * of the income and expenditure caused by such grievance, and the results of the same, and the date thereof, and forward a copy of the same to every member of the Society.

"That should the Auxiliary Fund be exhausted, the Executive Committee shall have power to order an equal levy on all members in work, for the purpose of meeting its demands.

"That should the members of any foundry have occasion to leave their employer through an act of oppression, no other member of this Society shall be allowed to commence work in the said foundry while such oppression exists: and further, that should any member have to leave his employment through an act of oppression, no member of this Society shall be allowed to work in his place while such oppression exists: and no other member working in the same foundry shall be allowed to work at the same job, and therefore, upon refusing, shall be entitled to the same allowance as the first who had to leave. And any member violating this law, shall be fined, or expelled, at the decision of the executive committee.

"That no member shall be allowed to apply for work at any

* The semi-annual reports, to which allusion is here probably made, as two of them appear sometimes to be issued together, contain all the separate accounts of the year or half-year of each of the branches, and very full statistical information as to the number of members, &c. There is also a very carefully drawn up table of deaths for the year of members and their wives, with the diseases scientifically described, evidently by a medical man, and their ages. If all large trade societies would keep a similar record, it would assist scientific men in estimating the relative healthiness of different trades, and the peculiar diseases generated by different occupations. There are also very full tables of the voting of all the branches upon any propositions which may have been made. There exists also apparently a system, for which no provision appears in the rules, which enables a man going to another town to borrow his railway fare from one branch, and to pay it in to the branch of the town he is going to. The branch lending, and the branch receiving, each send the amount to the central authority, and it is published in the report. There is also a history of the disputes with employers since the last report, and an account of how they were settled.

foundry where he knows that a grievance exists, directly or indirectly, without the sanction of the branch, or the executive committee, under a penalty of 5*s.* for each offence."

The result of each set of answers is given separately, because it is not clear that they relate to the same kind of work, or else the condition of trade varies very considerably in different places.

The Blackburn Iron Founder states that about fifty per cent. of his moulders are united, and nearly all his smiths, and all his mechanics: that his men are paid weekly, and partly by the piece, partly by the day: that the wages of the moulders are from 32*s.* to 34*s.* per week; of the smiths, 26*s.* to 27*s.*; and, of the mechanics, from 24*s.* to 28*s.*: that the unionists are generally, but not exclusively, of the more highly paid and skilled classes, and comprise in almost equal numbers the good and bad workmen of these classes: but that as a rule, the cleverer the workman, the less respect he has for the Union and *vice versâ*: and that the non-unionists are, as a class, more steady. As an employer, he has been fettered in employing non-unionists, and at one time, though he is now no longer, fettered in introducing piecework. There is an apprenticeship in the machine trade: the lad must not be under fourteen or over sixteen years of age, and he is bound by indenture till twenty-one. His wages begin at 4*s.* per week, and rise every year 1*s.* per week, till he is nineteen, and then they rise 2*s.* per week until he is twenty-one. Thus, at nineteen he receives 12*s.* per week. The proportion of apprentices is limited to one to every four journeymen,—a rule which is found very inconvenient, especially in slack times, when many journeymen fall out of employ. These often grumble at the work being done by the apprentices, and in one case, struck. The employer states, that in his opinion "the minds of apprentices are very much worked upon by the men, especially by those of the Union, and that a quick clever boy is often hindered, both as to the quantity and quality of the work he performs, by journeymen who fear to be ousted out of their places. For the same reason, men advise their fellows to restrict the quantity of the work done in a day."

The employer further states that unions have in many cases unwarrantably increased the rate of wages. There has been no strike in the trade for a long time.

The Sunderland manufacturer of pig and wrought iron states that there is scarcely any union among the men whom he employs; that there is no instance of a systematic and organized strike throughout the district, but that, when business fluctuates, there is nearly always a strike of small numbers, or of particular districts, either from masters refusing the demands of the men, or *vice versâ*. There being no strong union, there is no regular strike fund; what is collected is seldom equitably distributed, and the men for the time mostly subsist by begging. The general result of strikes is invariably in favour of the masters, though some slight concession has usually to be made.

The unionists are described as noisy talkative fellows of the skilled

classes, who will do anything but work. Wages are paid fortnightly at the rate of from £2 to £5 per week.* There is no apprenticeship: the work requiring strength and endurance, rather than skill.

The unions are stated to have had a tendency to keep up wages. Subjoined are the rules printed on the back of every pay ticket.

"REGULATIONS TO BE OBSERVED BY THE WORKMEN EMPLOYED AT THE IRON WORKS.

"1. No one shall absent himself from work at the time appointed by his employers, without the consent of his foreman, or the production of a medical certificate.

"2. Any one leaving the service of the company, must give fourteen days' notice on a pay-day, or forfeit all wages due to him. The same notice or a fortnight's labourers' wages will be given by the Company, except in cases of culpable neglect or misconduct.

"3. Any one damaging the machinery or property; wasting materials either through carelessness or design; neglecting his instructions, and using materials differing either in quantity or quality from those ordered; using disrespectful language to his superiors; being drunk or disorderly; will be fined one pound, or summarily dismissed the service, and forfeit all money due to him.

"4. No one shall bring any strangers into the works, or talk to such as may come in. Every one shall apply for and put in his own *time-board*, or subject himself to a fine of five shillings.

"5. Men employing others under them must in every case obtain the sanction of the foreman. Those so employed to be subject to all the rules and regulations of the works; the men employing them being held responsible by the Company for any fines or penalties they may incur.

"6. Every one must present his own pay ticket, and no complaint will be attended to after the money is taken from the window. Men leaving will receive their money on the Monday following the pay.

"The men will likewise be required to submit to such other rules and regulations as may from time to time become necessary, the posting of such in prominent situations in the works being deemed sufficient notice.

"The masters, in making known these regulations, signify their intention of seeing them enforced. They reserve to themselves the right of increasing the fines on offences being repeated, and shall also in extreme cases apply for the assistance of the magistrates.

"*September*, 1858. BY ORDER OF THE COMPANY."

The operative belonging to the iron trade states that the condition of admission into the Society is a regular apprenticeship of five years, or previous work for five years' as a journeyman and a good character: that the Society does not directly insist upon equal wages being paid to all members employed on the same work in the

* Piecework is the universal rule of the trade; even enginemen, firemen, and mechanics being often paid upon the iron produced.

same shop: that the question of wages is left for the master and workman to settle between themselves, but that there is in the workman the same feeling not to work below a certain price, as there is in the employer not to pay above a certain price: and that good workmen do not like to see their inferiors paid as well as themselves.

BOOTMAKERS.

[Materials:—Rules of London Masters' Association; Full Account by a Master of a Strike in B——, against a particular Shop, against the Use of Machinery; a few advertisements, &c.; an Address by a London Employer to the Men in his Employ.]

In 1838, there seems to have been a general strike in the boot trade, which led to an organization of the Master Boot and Shoemakers' Society, that overpowered, and for the time almost extinguished, the Union of the operatives.

In 1854, there was again a strike in the City and West-end of London, and the masters' society was once more called into activity, and with success.

A new Union was then formed amongst the operatives, but only as a benefit club, and having for its principle, no more strikes, but private arrangement in each shop between the employer and the men.

In 1859, an amalgamation of the old and new Union took place, and the result was in 1860, a strike for increase of wages.

The masters' society has taken active steps of self-defence, and are advertising for workmen, with the proviso that no trades' union or combination men need apply.

The boot trade seems to be in a very critical position. On the one hand, the price of leather has risen very much, and on the other, machinery is being introduced, not only for upper leathers, but for the manufacture of the whole boot; and the duty on French boots and shoes having been taken off, the home market is exposed to foreign competition.

The Master Boot and Shoemakers' Society consists of nearly 100 members, including some of the largest employers in London. The principal rules in their Society are as follows:—

"Rule 2. That this Society take for its principle that the union amongst its members is not for any reduction of wages, but for the protection of themselves and their journeymen from the oppression and evils of strikes and trades' union combinations; and that, if any member of this Society reduces his wages, he does so without its sanction, approval, or support.

"Rule 3. Subscription to be 10*s.* 6*d.* per annum.

"Rule 6. That no gentleman can be received as a member of this Society paying less than 6*s.* for the making of his boots, with stitched rands and stitched seats; and 5*s.* for boots with blind rands and blind seats.

"Rule 9. That in the event of any shop being struck, notice shall be sent thereof in writing to the secretary within twenty-four hours,

stating the names of the men so striking. And every member is pledged not to employ those men while the shop continues in that state.

"Rule 10. That the secretary shall immediately send a notice of such strike, and the names of such men, to every member of this Association; and every member shall immediately endeavour to supply the wants of the shop, by sending men, and by other means in his power.

"Rule 11. That all the members of this Society be pledged to support each other in the employment of any man, if his character and conduct be correct, whether such man be joined to a union or not.

"Rule 12. That to effect the objects of this Society each member is bound (providing that his own shop be not disturbed) to manufacture, upon the written order of the secretary, one or more pairs of boots or shoes per week for a fellow member, at the discretion of the committee."

Appended is a letter, *in extenso*, from a master bootmaker, in Blackburn, exhibiting the unwise and improper conduct of the operatives' Association in that town:—

"BLACKBURN, *June* 16, 1860.

"SIR,—The most simple way of answering your communication will be for me to give, in as few words as possible, a brief history of strikes with which I have myself had to contend. I have been in business only four years, and have already suffered from three strikes. When first I began business, I found great difficulty in obtaining workmen. Indeed, in order to get any work made at all, I had to pay the very highest wages, and received in return only second-rate work. I knew that, if this state of things continued, I should be unable to compete with other masters in the same trade. All the best workmen, in every branch, belong to trades' unions. There was, therefore, no alternative. So long as I paid the best wages, I must have the best workmen, and I could get these only from the trades' society. I never did pay to any man less than the statement wages, and for that reason never anticipated any unpleasantness from the trades' union. However, I was mistaken. A very few months had passed, when I happened to give out work to a man who did not belong to the Society. The day following a deputation waited upon me to say that I must immediately discharge him, and that, if I ever gave work to another 'non-society man,' my shop would be immediately struck. I was obliged to comply. In about another month I happened to put on several more men, and never once thought of asking whether they belonged to the Union or not. It happened that one of them did not belong to the trade union, so a meeting was immediately called, and in a very short time a deputation waited upon me again. They informed me that I had been told before not to give work to non-society men, and that they could not be at the expense of holding meetings on my account. I must, therefore, not only discharge the 'scab' (as they called him), but must likewise pay the expense of the meeting. I thought this was coming it rather too strong, and saw for the first time that if I did not make a stand I should have no peace. I therefore told them, in reply, that I would willingly discharge the

man, but as to paying the expenses of the meeting I would not, for, in my opinion, there had been no occasion for any meeting. If the secretary had merely called to inform me that the man did not belong to the Union, I should have discharged him at once. It was useless to reason with them. The shop was struck, and upwards of twenty men were sent on tramp. The trade's funds happened to be very low at that time, and as nearly all my men were married, and had families, the expenses were rather heavy, so that in about a month they came to me to see if they could not arrange matters with me. Their first proposal was that I must discharge all the men I had employed since the strike; but this I would not hear of. After a long delay the strike was settled, on these terms—that all my old men should return to their work; that I should retain the non-society men so long as I thought proper; but if ever they left, should give work only to men belonging to the club. This ended the first strike. Amongst shoemakers there are three distinct classes of men, viz., men's men, who make men's shoes; women's men, who make women's boots and shoes; and closers, who prepare and stitch the tops. It so happened that most of my men did not return after the strike, and not one of the closers, and we were consequently much plagued for tops for the men. I have known the men at this time to have been kept waiting as much as two days in each week. This was about two years ago last February. It was about the time also that the sewing machine began to be introduced into the shoe business. The first tops stitched with a machine I saw were offered for sale by Messrs. S——, of K——. I purchased a few dozen pairs, and the beauty of the work quite astonished the men. I spoke to several of my men on the subject, and told them what advantages they would derive if I were to buy a machine myself, inasmuch as they would then never have to wait a single hour for tops. They nearly all indeed coincided with me, and recommended me to buy one. This, however, I refused to do, till I received permission from the trades' union, being determined, as I thought, to prevent another strike. I therefore sent the following note to the trade's secretary:

"'SIR,—As there is a great scarcity of closers at present, and most of our men are kept waiting very often for tops, I think it would be advisable for me to purchase a sewing machine; would you, therefore, have the kindness to inform me whether the men would offer any impediment thereto.

"'I am, &c., A. B.'

"I received the following in reply,

"'*February 22nd*, 1858.

"'MR. A. B.

"'SIR,—The Society have fully considered your note of this date, and have resolved to offer no impediment to your employment of a machine for the purpose you name.

"'By Order of the Society,

"'C. D.'

"I objected to this note, because it was at first anonymous, but at length got the secretary's signature. I have always found them very tenacious on this point. On the 1st of March, I bought one of Thomas's Sewing Machines, and from that date a man of mine never waited an hour for tops. We went on comfortably for twelve months; the sewing machines must, by this time, have begun to affect the closers, for in February, 1859, they (the closers) were plentiful in Blackburn. In that month I was commanded by the very same Society to cease working the machine; they gave me time till the 1st of April, to look out for closers, and notice that, if I worked the machine after that date, the shop would be struck. Mr. P——, who is not in any way connected with me, received the same notice. My first impression was one of complete disgust, and I resolved to resist such tyranny; but on second consideration, I saw the busy time coming on, and saw more wisdom in trying to keep the men at work. I therefore began looking out for closers, but not one could I obtain. When April arrived, I told them this, but it was all in vain. What must be done? 'If I cannot get closers, the machine will be obliged to work,' thought I. There was no other alternative; so the shop was struck again, because I was obliged to use the very thing they granted only twelve months before. The day following I thought I would, if it were possible, still prevent the men from going, so I sent for the secretary, and told him that I would in future give out no more machine tops to be made in Blackburn, and I hoped that would satisfy the men. My reason for doing this was, because I thought I could get the machine tops made up elsewhere. So off he went, and I was almost satisfied that the strike was settled (it was not so however); for several months before this, I had been in the habit of not only doing our own tops, but had likewise sold a many to other masters, who were mostly in a small way of business. When the secretary did not return that day, I was somewhat at a loss; but on the day following, I became completely aware that it was impossible to come to any settlement with such ignorant and overbearing tyrants. A deputation waited upon me to say, that the men had decided that the machine must not work at all, I must not do tops of any kind for any person, the machine must stand still; I wished them to wait till the day following for my answer. I had already made up my mind what to do, but thought I would see to what extent they would go. When they called for my answer, I told them I would give up likewise doing tops of any kind with the sewing machine, provided they would purchase the one I had from me. I reasoned with them, and told them it was monstrous to suppose that I must buy a machine one day for their good, and dispose of it again on another to suit their purpose. I called attention to the secretary's letter, without any effect; so they returned again. They visited me next at half-past ten at night, and told me the men's decision, which was this: I must give up the machine altogether, and for the loss of time they had experienced I was fined £3, and if any other meetings were held concerning the matter, a fine of £2 for each meeting would be inflicted; I must

likewise, before they went back, sign a document to the effect that I would never at any time again thereafter apply the sewing machine in the manufacturing of boots and shoes. I was disgusted, and bid them leave the house; the following morning the secretary came to inform me that the shop was struck, and it has remained so to this day. During the past twelve months, I have certainly lost a good deal of money thereby, but 'necessity is the mother of invention'; I have invented and patented a machine which is capable of making one hundred and fifty pairs of boots or shoes per day, and it is now working on my premises daily, and the unionists, now they see they have no power, are as humble as possible. In justice however to some of our men, I must state that they were very much against the strong measures of the majority; and many of them were so much disgusted that they left the trade altogether, and some are working my machine at the present time. I enclose you the letter I sent the Society, immediately after the shop was finally struck; likewise the reply. The last strike was of such a trifling character that I need not relate it to you, especially as I think the above sufficient for your purpose. Hoping it may prove so,

"Believe me to be, yours obediently,

"A. B.

"P.S.—In order that you may thoroughly understand the foregoing letter and enclosed papers, I thought it better to state that my letter to the Society was written on the very day the shop was struck, whilst I was hot with excitement. A few days afterwards I was sorry for it, being satisfied the proper course for me to take under the circumstances would have been to treat them with silent contempt: I need therefore scarcely add, that I had only twenty copies printed, but I had instead a great number of the small handbills printed and circulated, and these brought me as many customers for tops as I could possibly supply. I may also further add, that the sewing machine or tops closed with it, are used in every shop in the town, without exception. Since I began working my own machinery for making the bottoms, a deputation from the Society has again waited upon me to state that I may have my shop settled, if I will discharge the men I now employ; it only shows how ignorant they must be, and is proof of the lamentable state of things it will involve, if such like men once become possessed of the franchise."

COVENTRY WEAVERS.

[Materials:—Rules of the Coventry Factory Operatives' Association; Answers by the Secretary of the Out-of-Doors Weavers' Association, and of the Factory Association, to the Questions concerning Trade Unions and Strikes; Answers by an ex-Foreman to the Questions concerning Strikes and those submitted to Employers of Labour; a printed account of the Strike and Lock-out in 1858.]

Up to within the last thirty years there were no factories and no strikes; the work was done by weavers at their own homes, and sold off by the piece to the manufacturers. Between 1830-1835, factories were established, where steam-power was used, and operatives em-

ployed at weekly wages. This for some time gave satisfaction, and the factory operatives even resisted proposals to introduce a system of piecework. Associations, however, were formed—one by the out-door weavers, in 1842,—to maintain a recognised list price, under which Coventry was divided into ten districts, and 1*d.* per week levied from each loom; another in 1850, by the factory operatives, to keep up the rate of wages,—members contributing 1*d.* per week and any extra levy that might be imposed in time of a strike, in order to pay an allowance of 8*s.* per week to operatives thereby thrown out of employment. The wages in the factories rapidly increased, according to the authority of one master, in the six years intervening between 1852 and 1858, from 12*s.* to 19*s.* or 21*s.* for sixty hours of labour; but, at the same time, the facility of manufacture increased still faster by the introduction of stronger and more powerful looms, so that the out-door weavers began to feel that they could not successfully compete with masters of factories employing steam-power, and held it their best chance to bring about the adoption by the masters in their factories of a price-list system in lieu of the weekly wages system, the prices being based upon the prices paid to out-door weavers,—*i. e.*, the same prices with a deduction, say, of 33⅓ per cent. for the expense and wear and tear of machinery. The operatives in factories were at first opposed to this change, but came to desire it, either hoping thereby to get better wages, or fearing lest, if the out-door weavers were absorbed into factories, all operatives would be entirely in the hands of their employers, and wages would fall. Employers were generally against the changes, partly because piecework system is a more troublesome one than that of weekly wages, but chiefly because it would work a forfeiture to them of the benefit from the increase of the productiveness of their machinery, an increase caused by their own outlay upon more powerful looms. Still, some masters did introduce piecework, and the desire for it to become universal daily increased amongst the operatives.

In 1858, some questions arose in manufactories where the piecework system had been established, as to whether the prices were fair, or the same as those given in Derbyshire, or were uniformly carried out in Coventry. The workmen proposed a list, and on its being rejected by several masters, struck against one of the masters. Thereupon a conference was held between three factory masters, who paid by the piece, and four delegates of factory operatives, and the list, as before proposed, with some alterations, was adopted by both parties. One factory master, however, not only rejected it, but announced his intention to return to the weekly wages' system. A short strike ensued, when the two parties agreed to adopt either the price-list, or weekly wages based upon the price-list.

This last agreement seems to have produced great effect upon those masters who had always adhered to the weekly wages' system, but had conducted it without reference at all to the price-list, and they feared that their own position was likely to be compromised. They determined, therefore, to take active steps. Accordingly, on August

27th, a manifesto, signed by five manufacturers, and shortly afterwards by five others, was issued, to the effect that in the event of any attempt to force any one of them, either to pay piecework, or increase their weekly wages, they would, at one and the same time, close all their factories. This manifesto was the signal for general war. On Saturday, August 8th, the operatives of one firm gave notice, and on the same day the other firms, as had been preconcerted, locked out their men. The operatives prepared for a great struggle to decide the question of a piecework, or weekly wages system. On August 30th they resolved that hands in factories should pay a levy of 1*d.* in the shilling on their earnings; on September 2nd, that out-door weavers should pay 1*s.* weekly for every a-la-bar loom in work, and 6*d.* weekly for every hand-loom; and on September 16th, that the levy should be increased, for factory weavers to 2*d.*, and for pickers-up, &c., to 1*d.* in the shilling on their earnings; and on October 6th, that the levy on the out-door weavers should be raised to 3*s.* weekly on a-la-bar looms, and 1*s.* weekly on hand-looms. At length the inhabitants of Coventry felt it was necessary to take some steps to terminate the struggle, if possible; and on October 12th they presented a memorial to the Local Board of Health, praying the Board to procure a meeting of the manufacturers and weavers, with a view to arrive at some terms of reconciliation. After some difficulty, arising especially from a temporary objection by the masters to meet members of the committee of the Operatives' Association, two committees, representing the two parties, were formed, held three meetings in the justice room (the proceedings of which have been published at full length), and appointed a sub-committee, who eventually drew up an elaborate list of prices to be binding on all parties. Thus the struggle ended, apparently with but one feeling in the minds of all, that some board of conciliation was necessary, and also quite practicable, to prevent a return of such disastrous disputes.

However this list had not been settled seven months before it was again disputed. In May, 1859, one master objected to the list on the ground that by it the same prices were paid for the manufacture of a certain kind of coarse inferior ribbon, as for the manufacture of ribbon of better quality, and he proposed to return altogether to the weekly payment system. The men struck rather than submit. The example of this master was not followed in the other factories, nor was he supported by the funds of the Coventry Silk Manufacturers' Association, though that body expressed its opinion that the proposition of the master was a fair one. On the other hand, there was a general combination amongst the men against the return to weekly wages, a combination of the factory and out-door operatives, of unionists and non-unionists. The strike was managed by the two committees of the Factory Weavers' Association, and the Out-Door Weavers' Association, and also by an auxiliary committee of the hands generally on strike. Levies were raised 15 per cent. on the weekly earnings of factory weavers, 7 per cent. on those of out-door weavers, also 2*s.* per week upon every loom worked in a private house, whether be-

longing to unionists or non-unionists. The allowance at first was to all those upon strike, whether men, women, or boys, 6½*d.* per diem; at the close, to members 1*s.* per diem, to non-members 10½*d.* The strike lasted ten weeks, from May 7, 1859, to July 21, 1859, and at the end of that time the master, finding he could not carry on his works by imported hands, agreed to continue the piecework system, and thereupon the operatives consented to be paid less for the manufacture of the cheap ribbon, their own charges for the same being proportionately reduced. The result of the whole was that the feeling against piecework, although under that system a large minority would earn higher wages than by weekly hirings, became stronger than ever, and several workmen were induced to procure one or two power-looms for themselves, and to work them at home; though there seems to be some doubt whether much success has followed from this plan. The associations of the operatives also received a large accession of numbers during and after this strike.

The strike was not free from cases of intimidation; one of the masters summoned several of his men for neglect of work, and he was followed in the streets, shouted at, escorted to church and chapel by numbers of operatives, some wearing their summonses upon their breasts. Also at the close a list of "knob-sticks," *i.e.*, of the hands that had been imported during the strike, was circulated through the district.

The commercial treaty, made with France in this year, has opened the whole question afresh. The masters, finding themselves exposed to more severe competition with the manufacturers of Basle and St. Etienne, proceeded to deliberate upon the resumption of the system of weekly wages. The men, on the other hand, had a large out-of-door meeting, at which they decided to insist upon piecework, and nothing short of an absolutely uniform list of prices. Eventually all the Coventry manufacturers withdrew their names from the piecework list, offering instead weekly wages, to men from 16*s.* to 20*s.*, to women from 9*s.* to 13*s.*, and in a printed circular gave the following reasons for their conduct:—

"1. Because neither manufacturers nor weavers have been faithful to the contract as to the piecework list.

"2. Because a compulsory uniform list has been used as an instrument of intimidation and persecution.

"3. Because it is the right of every Englishman to sell his labour to whom he will on his own terms.

"4. Because the weavers themselves recognise this right by employing persons in their own houses on weekly wages.

"5. Because while they do this they at the same time insist upon the list price being paid to them by the manufacturers.

"6. Because it is impossible to frame a list which shall be a just payment for all classes and kinds of work.

"7. Because a compulsory list bears unjustly upon those weavers who can earn more money in the factory on weekly wages than on piecework.

"8. Because it constitutes a barrier to the encouragement and adoption of many required improvements in the production of ribbons, and hampers the trade with artificial restrictions.

"9. Because the value of labour depends upon circumstances, and must fluctuate according to supply and demand; and a list price is framed on the assumption that the weaver's labour has a fixed and unchanging value.

"10. Because we are now exposed to the competition of manufacturers abroad, who have the command of a free labour market."

The weavers refused these terms, and decided to close every loom in Coventry and for fifteen miles round, and the result was, that about 12,000 men were thrown out of work. The greatest distress followed: out-door relief was one day distributed to the extent of £70 in bread; subscriptions were received from many quarters, including £80 from the Derby silk weavers, £50 from Sir J. Paxton, and £50 from the Right Hon. E. Ellice, M.P. Many workmen have been arrested for acts of disturbance, and the mayor has been compelled to issue a proclamation against any act tending to intimidation. The latest particulars have not reached us.

The whole dispute amongst the Coventry weavers seems to be reduced to this one question—which shall be the system of payment,—by the piece, or by weekly wages? This however is perfectly clear: that either system if fairly and sensibly worked can insure equitable remuneration alike to the operative and the manufacturer. But there is too much reason to believe that each party at present considers its own interests exclusively. On the one hand, the master insists upon weekly wages (by which the operatives receive the same payment however great be the amount of work produced), in order that he may monopolize the whole benefit gained by the increased productiveness of the larger looms. This, although the cost of the larger looms falls wholly upon the master, is nevertheless not fair, because these large looms require more skill and labour, and because the very fact that they are more profitable than small ones, increases proportionately the demand for labour to work them. On the other hand, the out-door weavers desire the factory operatives to be paid by the piece, and that prices should be based on the out-door prices, obviously with a view that they (the out-door weavers) with their hand and small looms may be put on a level with their competitors, the masters, who have powerful looms, and work them by steam. If so, they are endeavouring falsely to maintain the market for their own goods, and to place restrictions on the productiveness of others, and must be playing a losing game.

The case of the Coventry weavers seems to be one which, as they themselves felt in 1858, peculiarly calls for arbitration.

COVENTRY WATCH-MAKERS.

[Materials:—Answers by the Secretary on behalf of the Operatives' Society to the questions concerning Trades' Unions; Report of the first annual meeting; third half-yearly ditto; a list of prices; a balance-sheet.]

THE Society of the operatives was established in the year 1858, at a time when cheap and bad watches were bringing discredit on the trade, and depressing wages.

Its members are at present 600, but this does not constitute more than half the trade. Weekly contribution 1*d.*

Watch-makers are hired by the day, and also paid by piecework. The object of the Society is to fix a minimum wage, and for this purpose it has drawn up a list of prices. These however it can at present only recommend to both master and man, for the master manufacturers,—interested apparently in withholding from the public the prices they have paid or are paying, and in being unrestricted as to what wages they shall in future pay,—have either declined entering into any negotiation with the operatives' Society, or have promised to do so and failed. The report of the first annual meeting is chiefly occupied with the account of the abortive efforts of the Society to get the list of prices recognised, it also refers to the overstocking of the market with unskilled workmen, owing to the lax and overgrown system of apprenticeship.

The trade seems to be not entirely free from the truck system: and generally to be in rather a depressed state.

Balance-sheet of Coventry Watch-Makers' Association for half-year ending March 31st, 1860.

CR.	£	s.	d.
In Treasurer's hands, October 1st, 1859	8	6	11½
Contributions and Honorary subscriptions	50	6	1½
For admission to Mr. Cole's lectures	1	2	0
Discount on Messrs. Goods' bill	0	3	0
Interest from Bank	1	10	8
	£56	8	9

DR.	£	s.	d.
Paid Collectors	0	8	9
Use of St. Mary's Hall twice	1	7	8
Mr. Cole's lectures and expenses	6	10	0
Printer's Bill	2	8	10
Mr. Linwood	0	17	6
Advertising in *The Standard*	0	3	6
Ditto in *Free Press*	0	2	9
National Assurance United Trade, subscription for	2	0	0
To Bank	24	10	8
Postage	0	4	6
Quarter's rent for Committee Room	0	15	0
Secretary's Salary	2	10	0
Check-taker	0	3	0
In Treasurer's hands	11	11	9
	£56	8	9

Summary	£	s.	d.
In Bank, September 20th, 1859	84	10	0
Cash to Bank since	24	10	8
In Treasurer's hands	11	11	9
	£120	12	5
Deduct	£	s.	d.	
Due to Collector	8	8	0	
Good and Son	0	5	9	
Wilcox	0	15	0	
Secretary	2	10	0	
				6 13 9
Balance in favour of Association.				£113 18 8

UNITED KINGDOM SOCIETY OF COACHMAKERS.

[Materials:—38th, 42nd, and 45th Quarterly Report.]

THE points in the last Reports most worthy of notice are:—

1. The probability of a strike among the London coachmakers (a quite independent society) to reduce the hours of labour to ten per diem.

2. The proposal to contribute £150 to the London builders locked out.

3. Account of the strikes during the quarter—only local and insignificant ones, conducted chiefly to resist reduction of wages, or the introduction into the yards of operatives not exactly coach-builders, as blacksmiths, harness makers, horse shoers, and wheelwrights.

4. A grateful acknowledgment to two firms for having granted the short hours on Saturdays.

5. A promise of a list of "black" shops; and a list given of black operatives to the number of 182, with this explanation:—"Many members confusing the word 'black' applied to a man, with a non-society man, we wish to inform such, that a 'black' is a man who has at any time gone to work in a shop which is closed by us in consequence of some grievance existing and not removed. This refers to men who go in, not merely as soon as the men are brought out, but so long as it is closed, it may be for years."

6. A list of acts of embezzlement committed by secretaries.

The summary of the quarterly account of December, 1859, is—

Income.....£4,249 15*s.* 0*d.*	Expenditure...	£806	6 2
	Balance.....	443	7 10
		1,249	15 0
	In hand...	1,164	15 2
	Total ...	£2,414	10 2

Then follow the items *in extenso*. It appears that the Society is increasing; the present number of branches is 119, and the total number of members 3,928. A balance-sheet is presented for each branch:—

On the Income side stand the items—
- Contributions.
- Fines.

On the Expenditure side—
- Amount paid to travellers (the number of whom is given).
- Special and committee meetings.
- Postage, parcels, and stationery.
- Salary of secretaries.
- Superannuation.

Besides this, an account is given as to each town, of
- The arrears.
- The balance last quarter.
- The amount received from the executive committee.
- The balance sent to the executive committee.
- And the total balance at the end of the quarter.

MASONS IN THE NORTH OF ENGLAND.

[Materials:—Rules of the National Association of Master Builders; Rules of the Manchester District Branch of the same Association; Rules of the Journeymen and Master Masons of Halifax; Some Rules of the Operative Masons' Society, published in a Circular issued by the Masters during a Strike; Answers of a Building Firm of Halifax to the Questions submitted to Employers of Labour; a few miscellaneous papers.]

We are informed by the Halifax employers that in the district of Halifax (whatever are the limits of that district) there have been, at various times, combinations of masters, but only of a temporary and partial character, called into existence by emergencies; as, for instance, the present nine hours' movement has led to the formation of a society. These societies are, however, stated to have produced almost no effect upon trade.

The only two of such societies in the North of England, concerning which any information has been received, are the "National Association of Master Builders," and the "West Riding Association of Master Builders."

The National Association of Master Builders was established in July, 1857; it was intended to be a permanent, wide-spreading, and elaborately organized Association, as is manifest from the rules and resolutions presently quoted.

The Prospectus of the Association runs as follows:—

"The Association is to consist of all parties connected with the building trade who may be disposed to incorporate themselves as members, and to conform to the rules. Its object is to watch over and protect the interests of the building trade throughout the United Kingdom. It has no intention to adopt any means, or to make use of any combined efforts which will in anywise militate against the wellbeing of the operative, or in the least degree retard the progressive improvement of the condition of so important a class of the community of this country as our skilful artisans; but on the contrary, it proposes to introduce such salutary correctives as shall be mutually advantageous to both the employer and the employed, and which

shall have the effect of checking those unwarrantable movements so frequently made by national organized societies, which tend to injure the trade, and are such fruitful sources of loss to the workman, and of privation to their families."

By the second rule, the entrance fee is fixed at *5s.*

By the third rule, the Association is to have an annual meeting. At this meeting the accounts are to be audited, the office-bearers for the ensuing year appointed, central and district reports received, and, if satisfactory, adopted; and such time is to be allowed by the president, as he may think necessary for deliberation upon the general affairs of the Association.

The president, treasurer, secretary, and committee of seven, are to meet quarterly.

The seventh rule, after premising that in order efficiently to carry out the plans and intentions of this Association, it is necessary to institute a judicious division of labour, prescribes that for this purpose the various localities of the United Kingdom shall, from time to time, be divided into districts, and the respective towns or places shall be incorporated with such district as the central committee, in conjunction with the local association, may agree upon; that the local association at the head of any district, shall visit, or otherwise communicate with all the master masons and builders in their district, using every effort to forward the interests of the Association; that the district treasurer shall cause to be collected from each member the sum of *5s.*, and, when called upon, shall remit all monies received to the general treasurer; and that the district secretary shall forward the names and address of those persons who from time to time shall become members, and shall afford in writing, addressed to the secretary of the Association, special or general information.

By the eighth rule, each district association is to send one or more delegates to the quarterly meetings, and also to other meetings, if circumstances, in the opinion of the central committee, require the same.

In pursuance of the seventh and eighth rules, it was at the same time resolved that Manchester should be appointed as the central place for conducting the affairs and business of the Association for the year commencing from July 15, 1857, and that the following places should be appointed heads of districts, viz., Birmingham, Blackburn, Bolton, Darlington, Leicester, Derby, Huddersfield, Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield, and York.

The chief immediate object of the Association was to procure the uniform adoption by all masters of the system of payment by the hour, instead of by the day. With this view their first practical resolution, dated July 11, 1857, was, "That from and after the first Monday in May, 1858, all members shall commence payment of wages to their respective workmen at a rate per hour, and not per day; notice of this uniform payment of wages by the hour to be given by each master to his own workmen on the 1st day of November,

1857, stating the amount of wages per hour he will pay, and other alterations, if any, from the usual local arrangements."

The advantages of this change are thus stated, in a very sensible address issued by the Liverpool master masons, in the month of April, 1858.

Advantages to the employers :—The "hour" furnishes as a basis for their calculations a portion of time which is the same all the year round, whereas "day" is a portion of time of uncertain length. For instance, "day," on Monday represents a period of nine hours, on the four succeeding days ten hours, and on Saturday eight and a half hours. To make an equitable division of this into days and quarters requires three separate entries, even during the summer or long days, and during the winter months the division is fraught with further difficulty and inconvenience.

Advantages to the operative :—1. A mason having work on hand, and coming late to it, will be able to commence work at the termination of any one hour, instead of having to lose a quarter of a day; he will also be able to commence any fresh job at any hour during the day. 2. A mason will not so often lose a Saturday's work. Under the day system, if a master has a job at the end of the week, he usually, to get the benefit of a full day's work for a day's pay, gives notice on the Friday to the men to come on Monday, and not before.

Advantage to the public :—In the case of repairs and alterations they will not have to pay a full day's wages for a short day's work, nor to submit to the inconvenience of the delay occasioned by the master, as is frequently the case, sending the men away from work on the short days.

The notice, according to the resolution of the Association, was duly given, but in April, 1858, the masters were informed by a deputation of operatives that the operative masons of England refused to accept payment by the hour. The masters have been unable to enforce their object, and the system of payment by the day is still in operation. We have not been informed whether the National Association of Masters continues in existence.

Of the West Riding Association of Master Builders we have no information, beyond the fact that it arose in consequence of the nine hours' movement. One of its rules is indicated in the following circular :—

"Brunswick Terrace, Leeds, *August* 7, 1860.

"Gentlemen,—I beg to enclose you a list of masons' names lately employed by members of this Association at Halifax, and now on strike.

"According to the rules we are bound not to employ these men in any other town until the strike is terminated.

"I remain, yours very respectfully,

"A. B., *Secretary.*"

A list of eighty-five names is appended to this letter.

The employer who has given us information concerning the trade at Halifax and Bradford, states that a general advance of wages took place in July, 1855, and August, 1857, that they have not since fallen, and that the current wages of masons are 4*s.* 6*d.* per diem. This last statement, it is presumed, refers only to the wages at Halifax during the summer, *i.e.* nine months of the year, for otherwise it would require some qualification,—the Halifax wages, if the rules of 1858 are still in force, being, for the winter months, 4*s.* 2*d.* per diem, and the Huddersfield wages being 4*s.* all the year round. The system of apprenticeship in the joiners' and carpenters' department, is by a seven years' indenture. In the masons' department there is no system at all. Journeymen are allowed to have two, and in some instances three, sons. They move about, it is said, from place to place, to get more wages for their sons. At about eighteen years of age these apprentices enter the Society, and become the most active members in cases of strike, causing the Societies to act in such a way as often to disgust the older members, who in many instances, to the knowledge of the employer, have renounced all connexion with the Societies. The employer thinks that there should be a system of apprenticeship in all the building departments, which would exclude inefficient workmen, who now draw undue wages by means of the Society. All combinations, both of masters and men, should, he is of opinion, be abolished.

The same employer states that the Union comprises about one-half of the operatives; that, in his opinion, it is quite unnecessary for the maintenance of wages, for though it may sometimes effect a temporary rise, yet in the building trade the direct and immediate operation of the law of supply and demand, which brings all wages to their natural level, is clearly perceptible; that the fixed rate of wages is a most mischievous system—it invites only the inferior workman by the prospect of wages higher than he deserves, it causes the best workmen to keep aloof from the Society, and it makes those who are members careless and indifferent workmen. Unionists strike against the employment of a single non-unionist in the same works, and will not allow the masters to procure ready-worked material from the quarries. As compared with non-unionists, they are represented to be unreasonable, because oppressed into a submission of the most abject kind to the dictum of a committee or some other unseen authority; to come from the more unskilled and more lowly paid class; and in all cases to do work inferior in kind and less in quantity.

The rules of unionists are regulated, as to general principles, by their central Society, but in particulars by the district Societies, in some cases sanctioned by the district masters. The following comparison may be instructive.

RULES FOR THE JOURNEYMEN AND MASTER MASONS OF THE TOWN OF HALIFAX AND ITS VICINITY, AGREED TO BY EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYED, MARCH, 1859.

1. *Hours of Labour.* The hours of labour to be
Monday..... 7 A.M.—5.30 P.M.
Saturday ..... 6 A.M.—4 P.M.
Other days..... 6 A.M.—5.30 P.M.
In no case work to be later than 5.30 P.M.

2. *Quarter Time.* Quarter Time to be, during the winter months, *i.e.* from the 12th of November to the 14th of February (both days inclusive), from 9.30 A.M. to 3 P.M.; in the summer months from 9 A.M. to 3 P.M.

3. *Wages.* Summer Wages, 4*s.* 6*d.* per diem; winter ditto, 4*s.* 2*d.*

4. *Payment of Wages.* Wages to be paid weekly, immediately after 4 P.M., and not in a public-house or inn.

5. *Meal Hours.* An hour every day for dinner; and during the summer months, half an hour also for breakfast.

6. *Piecework and Overtime.* Subcontracting and piecework to be abolished.
Overtime not be allowed, except in cases of emergency, and then men not to work more than two hours for a quarter of a day; and to be allowed time and a half for all time worked after the first quarter.

7. *Sheds.* Sheds shall be erected upon all jobs where found necessary; but where there are no sheds, the men shall receive 6*d.* per day above their regular wages.

8. *Notice.* Should any of these rules

SOME RULES OF THE OPERATIVE MASONS, PUBLISHED IN A CIRCULAR OF THE MASTERS DURING A STRIKE AT HUDDERSFIELD, IN MARCH, 1860, AND THEREIN PRONOUNCED TO BE "TOTALLY INAPPLICABLE TO THE MASTERS, OR THOSE WITH WHOM THEY CONTRACT FOR WORK."

1. That we commence work at 7 o'clock every morning throughout the year. That a day's work be from 7 A.M. to 5.30 P.M.; and on Saturday the work to cease at 4 P.M., and on all days (except Saturday) in the winter months, from the 12th of November to the 14th of November, at 5.

2. That 9.30 A.M. be the starting point for three quarters of a day, and 1 P.M. for a half day's work.

3. Current Wages for every working day throughout the year to be 4*s.*

4. Wages to be paid every Saturday, as soon as work ceases, either at the employer's office or on the work. In no case at a public-house.

5. During the summer months, half an hour for breakfast and an hour for dinner. During the winter months, 20 minutes for breakfast and 40 minutes for dinner.

6. No master to sublet any mason's work; and no member of this Society to work by the piece or sub-contract with any master mason.
No member to work more than six days per week, except at jobbing, or other work where it can be shown that there is a necessity to work overtime; in which case, and likewise for work on Sunday, they shall work two hours for the first quarter, and be paid for work after that time at the rate of time and a half. Overtime, in winter to be calculated from the time of leaving off up to the time of starting on the job for the time being.

7. In yards, or on jobs, the nature or extent of which render the demand reasonable, sheds shall be erected; the Society, in conjunction with the masters, to have a voice, where dispute exists relative to the erection of sheds. Any employer not acting in accordance with this rule to pay one-half of the time his men may lose in consequence thereof.

8. Either party wishing to make any

require to be altered, three months' notice shall be given, both by masters and men.	alteration in these rules, shall give six months' notice, stating the nature of the alterations. The notice to expire between the 1st of May and the 1st of August.

The chief difference between these two sets of rules, it will be observed, consists in this: that, as compared with Huddersfield masons, the Halifax masons, in summer, work 5 hours more per week and receive 3*s*. more wages; and in winter work 7½ hours more and receive 1*s*. more. Bearing this in mind, the fact that one set of rules was sanctioned by the Halifax masters, and the other set was pronounced by the Huddersfield masters to be totally inapplicable, admits of several solutions. Either it is only the points of difference that constitute the total inapplicability of the Huddersfield rules; or both rules are inapplicable, and the Halifax masters must be supposed to have granted their sanction only under constraint; or both sets are fair rules, and the Huddersfield masters took unreasonable objection to theirs; or, lastly, rules which were fair at Halifax in March, 1859, were not fair at Huddersfield in March, 1860.

In the month of April in the present year, the Bradford operative masons addressed the following letter to the master builders:—

To the Master Builders of Bradford and its Vicinity.

"King's Head, Bradford, *April* 10, 1860.

"Sirs,—We, the operative masons of Bradford and its vicinity, do ask of you to grant us a reduction in the hours of labour from 57½ to 51½ hours per week, which will be one hour less in each day in the week, the same to commence on the first Monday in June of the present year. This is a decision of a general meeting held on the 2nd of April,—and this is to serve as a notice of the same. Hoping you will see with us, and grant our request,

"We remain, yours respectfully,

"The Operative Masons.

"All communications to be addressed to the Chairman of Committee, King's Head Inn, Westgate, Bradford."

And on the 11th of July this letter was succeeded by another to the following effect:—

"*July* 11, 1860.

"Gentlemen,—We have been requested by some of our employers to urge on you the necessity of having a meeting to meet the operatives previous to having the new code of rules for Bradford printed.

"A reply will oblige yours,

"The Operative Masons of Bradford.

"King's Head, Westgate."

It does not appear whether or not to these letters any reply, in the nature of a formal acknowledgment such as would have been a proper act of consideration, was sent; nor does my information enable me to verify the allegation of the operatives that they gave

distinct warning to the masters that the Union committee would sit fourteen days to receive communications; but, at all events, no substantial communication was made by the masters till the 31st of July. Still there is nothing to show any real disregard on their part towards the demand of the operatives, for on that day, in accordance with a resolution carried at a meeting held to consider the means of dealing with what they thought an excessive and inconvenient reduction of the hours of labour to 8h. 35m. per diem, they offered, in lieu of an alteration in the hours of labour, an advance of wages in one of the two following methods :—Either, time being kept as before, an advance of 1*s.* per week to be paid to each man; or the week's work to consist of fifty-seven hours, work on Monday beginning an hour later, and on Saturday closing at noon, and payment to be by the hour, at the rate of 6*d.* per hour.

This offer was, to judge by the one instance before me, made by each master to his own men, in writing, and signed by him; and, according to the representation of an employer, it would have been acceptable to the majority of the Union, but, at the dictation of their officers, it was refused.

The masters then, either singly or collectively, made a second proposition, this time, apparently, to the Union collectively, viz., that five employers and five employed should form a committee to manage the difference, with power to choose three disinterested persons, whose decision should be final.

This proposition met with the following unwise and discourteous answer :—

"Lord Nelson Inn, Cow Green Inn, Halifax,
"*July* 31, 1860.

"Sirs,—In reply to your letter this evening, which has been laid before the general meeting, we beg to state that such propositions cannot be entertained now, as you would see by the appeal we sent to you, that a committee would sit fourteen days to receive any communications you might think proper to introduce, and as no proposition was received during that time, none can be entertained now. Nothing more to communicate.

"We remain, yours respectfully,
"The Masons of Halifax.

"To Messrs. ——"

The result of this difference has not been made known to us.

The only further remarks that here suggest themselves are—

1. That the "National Association of Master Builders" offers the rare, if not unique, instance of a masters' association organized into a central committee and local branches, and in this respect, conducting its operations on exactly the same principle as an ordinary operatives' trade union.

2. That the "West Riding Association of Master Builders" has a "black list" of masters, just as trade unions have their "black lists" of operatives.

3. That the operative masons of Bradford and Halifax make their communications with their masters, not by a writing signed with their own names, or on behalf of those in the employ of the particular master to whom the address is made, but by a mere circular, signed "The Operatives of Bradford," or, "The Operatives of Halifax," and sent round to the several masters. This course cannot be recommended. A master has a right to complain, if his men do not give him the opportunity of treating with them directly; and the operatives may suffer from it, for the validity of such a circular to found a legal notice will, as appears from the report on the chain makers, be always open to question.*

* Sup. pp. 154, 155.

SKETCH

OF THE

HISTORY OF LEGISLATION IN ENGLAND

RELATING TO

COMBINATIONS OF WORKMEN.

REPRINTED, BY PERMISSION, FROM

"AN INQUIRY INTO THE LAW OF 'STRIKES.'"

By FRANCIS D. LONGE,

OF THE INNER TEMPLE, BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

THE statutes which in former times had a direct bearing upon the law of "strikes" were:—

(1.) Those fixing the rate of wages which workmen should receive, the hours of their work, or the periods of their hiring.

(2.) Those prohibiting workmen from entering into agreements amongst themselves, either for the purpose of advancing the rate of their wages, or determining any other terms upon which they should employ their labour.

As the rate of wages, fixed by statute, was in every case the maximum rate which either the masters might give or workmen receive, so long as such legal rate existed, a demand by either one or more workmen of wages above the legal rate was a contempt of the statute law. The earlier statutes against combinations then may be regarded as being subsidiary only to the statutes fixing the rate of wages.

The practice of fixing the rate of wages by statute commenced in the year 1350.

It appears from the history of the first statute of labourers, as well as from the express words of the Legislature, that it was enacted with the direct object of compelling the labourer to accept lower wages than he would otherwise have been able to obtain.

A great plague having diminished the numbers of the labouring class, the survivors claimed to benefit by the absence of former competition, and to enjoy some advance of wages. This, however, was at once prevented. An ordinance of the Government, which was afterwards confirmed by the 25th Ed. III. c. 2, prohibited workmen from taking any higher wages than those which were customary before the plague. The preamble to this statute is as follows:—

"Whereas late against the malice of servants which were idle, and not willing to work after the pestilence without taking excessive

wages, it was ordained that such manner of servants, as well men and women, should be bound to serve, receiving salary or wages accustomed, in places where they ought to serve, in the twentieth year of the reign of the king that now is, or five or six years before (*i.e.* before the plague); and that the same servants refusing to serve should be punished by imprisonment of their bodies; and forasmuch as it is given the king to understand in this present Parliament that the said servants, having no regard to the said ordinance but their ease and singular covetise, do withdraw themselves to serve great men and other unless they have living and wages to the double and treble of that they were wont to take the said twentieth year before, to the great damage of the great men and impoverishing of all the commonalty, Wherefore," &c.

It was by this statute enacted (1) that labourers in husbandry should not take more than a certain sum, and that they should be hired for certain times, and that twice in every year they should be sworn to obey the statute; any labourer disobeying the statute to be put in the stocks for three days; (2) that carpenters, masons, and other workmen in the building trades, should work for certain wages during the summer, and for less during the winter; and that all workmen and artificers should obey the statute on peril of fine and imprisonment at the discretion of the justices.

This power of imprisonment was afterwards restricted to fifteen days.

The next statute, viz. the 34th Ed. III. c. 9, was directed especially against workmen belonging to the building trade. Their employment being necessarily precarious, it seems that they had objected to be hired by the day at no higher wages than those of other day labourers, and had been combining in order to obtain better terms than those which the Legislature thought proper to allow them. This is the first statute expressly prohibiting *combinations* of workmen. It enacts—

"That carpenters and masons take from henceforth wages by the day, and not by the week, nor in other manner; and that the chief masters of carpenters and masons take four pence by the day, and the others three pence or two pence according as they be worth. And that all alliances and covines of masons and carpenters, and congregations, chapters, ordinances, and oaths betwixt them, made or to be made, shall be henceforth void and wholly annulled; so that every mason and carpenter, of what condition that he be, shall be compelled by his master to whom he serveth to do every work that to him pertaineth to do; but it shall be lawful to every lord or other to make bargain or covenant of their work in gross with such labourers or artificers when please them," &c.

It appears that the rate of daily wages appointed by this statute for the master workmen in these trades was less than that appointed by the former statute (25th Ed. III. c. 2) for the higher class of agricultural labourers. By that statute a mower was to take five pence by the day, a reaper two pence or three pence.

In 1405, by 7th Hen. IV. c. 17, the "good" statutes (viz. the 25th Ed. III. c. 2, and a statute of Richard II. forbidding labourers in husbandry to use their bows and arrows except on Sundays) were ordained to be kept in all points and put in due execution.

The 3rd Hen. VI. c. 18 shows an attempt to prevent combinations amongst workmen in the building trades by making it a capital offence to organize such combinations, and subjecting workmen who should take part in them to an indefinite term of imprisonment. The preamble to this statute is as follows:—

"Whereas, by the yearly congregations and confederacies made by the masons in their general chapters, the good course and effect of the statute of labourers be openly violated and broken in subversion of the law, and to the great damage of the commons," &c.; therefore it was by this statute enacted, that such chapters, &c., should not be thereafter holden; and, "that if any such be made, that they that cause the same to be holden, being convict, should be adjudged for felons; and that all other persons that should come to such chapters should be punished by imprisonment and fine," &c.

It will have been observed that this statute prohibits the combinations of masons on the ground that they interfered with the operation of the statute of labourers.

In 1444, the general rate of wages for all ordinary workmen was again fixed by the 23rd Hen. VI. c. 12.

In 1549 was passed the first statute prohibiting workmen generally from entering into agreements amongst themselves as to the mode in which their work should be conducted.

The preamble to the 2nd and 3rd Edw. VI. c. 15 is as follows:—

"Forasmuch as of late divers sellers of victuals, not contented with moderate and reasonable gain, but minding to have so much as list them, have conspired and covenanted together to sell their victuals at unreasonable prices, and likewise artificers, handicraftsmen, and labourers have made confederacies and promises not only that they should not meddle with one another's work, and perform and finish that one hath begun, but also to constitute and appoint how much work they shall do in a day, and what hours and times they shall work, contrary to the laws and statutes of this realm, and to the great hurt and impoverishment of the king's revenue," &c. Therefore it enacts (with regard to the workmen) that if any artificers, labourers, &c., should conspire, covenant, or promise together that they should not make nor do their works but at a certain rate, &c.; or should not work but at certain hours and time, &c., they should forfeit for the first offence £10, or else should suffer for the same offence twenty days' imprisonment; for the second offence £20, or the pillory; for the third offence £40, or the pillory, loss of one ear, &c.*

* It is clear from this statute that the Legislature of 1549 did not consider that combinations of workmen to control their employers in these matters were offences at common law; if they had been, workmen would have been already liable to a much severer punishment than that imposed by this statute.

This section continued to be the only *general* enactment against associations of workmen for these purposes until 1799.

By the fourth section it was intended to put a stop to the practice on the part of associations of masons, &c., in different towns, of preventing other workmen invading their local monopolies; by it all persons were forbidden "to interrupt, deny, let or disturb any such workmen coming to dwell and work in their towns."

This attempt on the part of the Legislature to compel workmen to adopt free-trade principles, against their own immediate interests, was unsuccessful. The next year the City of London appealed against it, on the ground that it would drive away their craftsmen and artificers, and impoverish the city. By the 3rd and 4th Ed. VI. c. 21 accordingly, this enactment was "utterly made void for ever."

This last statute may be regarded as an express recognition by the Legislature of the practice of "striking" against strange workmen. It is true that the object for which such exclusion was expressly allowed, was not for the benefit of the workmen themselves, but for that of the towns in which they resided. But it is evident that at this time such a proceeding was not regarded as a criminal offence, either as a conspiracy at common law or even as a conspiracy to obstruct the operation of existing statutes.

It appears, however, that about this time the Legislature began to consult the interests of the workmen, as well as those of the other classes. By another statute passed in this year, employers in certain trades were forbidden to hire their journeymen for any period less than a quarter of a year; and ten years afterwards was passed the important statute, viz. 5th Eliz. c. 4, which established an entirely new system for regulating both the price of labour and the manner in which it should be employed in every department of the labour-market. The object and policy of this statute appears from the preamble. It states that:—

"As the many laws which were then in existence for the rating of wages and regulating the hiring of workmen, although for the most part good, yet could not be fully carried out without the great grief and burden of the poor labourer and hired man; its object was to reduce the substance of these laws into one, and to prescribe a uniform order concerning the wages and orders of apprentices, servants, and labourers; that thereby idleness might be banished, husbandry advanced, and a convenient proportion of wages yielded to the hired servant both in time of scarcity and in time of plenty."

This statute is generally known as the statute of apprentices; its enactments which were most frequently brought into notice being those which made it necessary for every workman to have served an apprenticeship of seven years in that trade in which he sought employment. As employers were restricted in the number of apprentices which they might employ, these enactments had the effect of securing to the workmen of almost every trade those advantages which in many cases have been the objects of "strikes."

By the third section it was enacted that the workmen in a great

number of trades, including tailors, shoemakers, clothweavers, cutlers, hatmakers, &c., should not be hired for any term less than one year.

By the fourth section persons who had worked for three years in any of these trades, and not otherwise privileged, were compelled to accept employment "upon request made by any person using the art or mystery wherein the person so required had been exercised."

By other sections labourers in husbandry were compelled to work, and rules were laid down as to the mode in which they should be hired.

By the fifteenth section a most elaborate scheme was established (by the 1st James I. cap. 6, declared to apply to all artificers and workmen whatsoever) by which the wages of labour were to be fixed every year by the justices of the peace at the Easter quarter sessions; the rate so fixed was to be afterwards published by royal proclamation in every market town.

By the eighteenth section, any master giving more than the legal rate, was subjected to ten days' imprisonment, and a fine of £5. And by the nineteenth, any workman taking higher wages than those appointed, was subjected to imprisonment for twenty-one days.

This system continued to be part of the statute law until 1813, when it was abolished by the 53rd Geo. III. c. 40; but it having been considered to be in the discretion of the magistrates whether they should appoint a rate, so far as regarded the wages of the higher classes of workmen, it seems that in the exercise of this discretion, they had long before that date ceased to fix the wages of any other workmen than those employed in agriculture.

In 1776, Adam Smith writes as follows with regard to the practice of fixing wages by law:—

"I shall conclude with observing, that though anciently it was used to rate wages first by general laws extending over the whole kingdom, and afterwards by particular orders of justices of the peace in every particular county, both these practices have now gone entirely into disuse.

"Whenever the Legislature attempts to regulate the differences between masters and workmen, its counsellors are always the masters."*

It is probable that the higher classes of workmen, as well as their employers, had, even in the early part of the last century, found it of no advantage to pay any regard to the justices' assessment.

It appears, however, from the Report of the Journeymen Tailors of Cambridge, † that in the year 1726, the wages of journeymen tailors had been fixed at 2*s.* per diem. In the year 1742, Dalton, in his "Country Justice," ‡ recommends that the "Constable's Sessions," which were held for the purpose of appointing the rates of wages for the year under the statute, should be better attended by workmen as well as employers.

In 1811, certain journeymen millers in Kent presented a petition

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* Wealth of Nations, Book I. cap. x.

† 8 Mod. Rep. p. 11.

‡ P. 141.

to the justices at Quarter Sessions, stating that their wages were too low, and requesting them to exercise the powers given them by the fifteenth section of the Statute of Elizabeth, and make a rate of wages. The justices refused to hear the petition. The legality of their refusal was afterwards discussed on motion for a writ of mandamus. Lord Ellenborough decided that although the power of rating wages given by the Statute of Elizabeth had been only acted upon with regard to labourers in husbandry, yet that the justices were empowered to fix the wages of all workmen, by virtue of the 1st James I. c. 6, and the 16th Car. I. c. 4, and accordingly granted a rule absolute for a writ of mandamus to compel the justices to hear the petition, but to exercise their own discretion as to making a rate. It appears that the justices heard the petition, but refused to make the rate.*

While, then, this system of rating wages continued to be part of the statute law, while masters were liable to ten days' imprisonment for giving wages above the legal rate, and while all workmen were commanded to accept employment when offered them according to the regulations of the statute, no "strike" could take place either for an advance of wages, or for any other purpose, without a direct violation of the statute law; and any agreement or combination among workmen to control their employers in the conduct of their trade might be regarded as a conspiracy to obstruct or oppose the operation of this statute and other statutes which were passed for the purpose of regulating the employment of labour in particular trades.

But during the last century, manufacturing trades began to assume a very different character to that which they bore at the time of the Statute of Elizabeth, and previously. Instead of a master and a few apprentices and journeymen standing in an intimate relation to each other, an establishment now began to consist of a capitalist and a vast number of workmen, connected with each other only by short hirings, and opposed to each other by their many conflicting interests. This state of things necessarily both induced and enabled workmen more than ever to associate together for the purposes of protecting or advancing their interests against those of their employers, which at the same time an advance in knowledge and intelligence rendered them more capable of ascertaining. It appears, then, that when combinations of workmen became more frequent and more important, whatever power the criminal court might already possess to deal with such proceedings, it was thought either too uncertain or too dilatory for the nature of the subject; and accordingly, as "strikes" occurred in particular trades, the Legislature was called upon to apply some more effectual remedy. Thus, many statutes were passed during the last century for the protection of the employers in different trades. These statutes, generally called the "combination laws," prohibited all agreements or associations of workmen

* R. *v.* Justices of Kent, 14 East, 395.

for the purpose of advancing wages, or controlling their masters in the management and regulation of their business, and empowered the magistrate to convict summarily, and punish with imprisonment for two or three months, any workman who should take part in them.

In the second section of the present statute, by which they are repealed, these statutes and enactments are enumerated. They differed from each other in little more than the denomination of workmen against whom they were directed; while it might be inferred from this piecemeal legislation, that combination was a greater offence in some trades than in others, and in some trades no offence at all.

At the commencement of the present century, however, the Legislature had not only discovered that strikes were common to almost every trade, but had also become thoroughly acquainted with the different purposes for which they were employed, and the manner in which they were conducted and supported. Accordingly, in the year 1800, a statute (40th Geo. III. c. 106) was directed against all associations of workmen for any of these purposes.

By the first section of this statute all agreements between journeymen and workmen for obtaining an advance of wages for themselves or other workmen, or for lessening the hours of work, or for preventing or hindering any person from employing whomsoever he should think proper to employ, or for controlling or in any way affecting any person carrying on any manufacture in the conduct or management thereof, were thereby made and declared to be illegal.

By the second section, one justice of the peace was empowered to convict summarily, and impose two months' imprisonment upon workmen who should enter into any such agreement.

By the third section, the same punishment was imposed upon workmen who should by giving money, or by persuasion, solicitation, or intimidation, or any other means wilfully and maliciously endeavour to prevent any unhired workman from hiring himself, or hired workman from continuing in his employ, or who should prevent any master from employing such workman as he should think proper, or who being hired should without any just cause refuse to work with any other journeyman or workman.

By other sections, further provisions were made with regard to the funds obtained by workmen to support them during their "strikes."

This elaborate attempt on the part of the Legislature to prevent "strikes" was its last. Experience soon showed that such laws were not only useless, but pernicious. . . .

It was not, however, until 1824 that the combination laws were repealed. In that year a Committee of the House of Commons was appointed to consider the laws relating to workmen and artisans. They returned the following report with reference to this part of the subject:—

(1.) "That it appears by the evidence before the committee, that combinations of workmen have taken place in England, Scotland, and Ireland, often to a great extent, to raise and keep up their wages,

to regulate their hours of working, and to impose restrictions on their masters respecting apprentices or others whom they might think proper to employ; and that at the time the evidence was taken, combinations were in existence, attended with strikes or suspension of work; and the laws have not hitherto been effectual to prevent such combinations.

(2.) "That serious breaches of the peace, and acts of violence, with strikes of the workmen, often for very long periods, have taken place in consequence of and arising out of the combinations of workmen, and have been attended with loss to both masters and workmen, and with considerable inconvenience and injury to the community.

(3.) "That the masters have often combined to lower the rates of their workmen's wages, as well to resist a demand for an increase, and to regulate their hours of working, and sometimes to discharge their workmen, who would not consent to the conditions offered to them, which have been followed by suspension of work, riotous proceedings, and acts of violence.

(4.) "That prosecutions have frequently been carried on under the statute and common law against the workmen, and many of them have suffered different periods of imprisonment for combining and conspiring to raise their wages, or to resist their reduction, and to regulate their hours of working.

(5.)"That several instances have been stated to the committee, of prosecutions against masters for combining to lower wages, and to regulate the hours of working, but no instance has been adduced of any master having been punished for that offence.

(6.) "That the laws have not only not been efficient to prevent combinations either of masters or workmen, but on the contrary have, in the opinion of many of both parties, had a tendency to produce mutual irritation and distrust, and to give a violent character to the combinations, and to render them highly dangerous to the peace of the community.

(7.) "That it is the opinion of this committee that masters and workmen should be freed from such restrictions as regards the rate of wages, and hours of working, and left at perfect liberty to make such agreements as they may mutually think proper.

(8.) "That therefore the statute laws that interfere in this particular should be repealed; *and also the common law, under which a peaceable meeting of masters or workmen may be prosecuted as a conspiracy, should be altered.*

(9.) "That the committee regret to find from the evidence that societies, legally enrolled as benefit societies, have been frequently made the cloak under which funds have been raised for the support of combinations and strikes attended with acts of violence or intimidation; and without recommending any specific course, they wish to call the attention of the House to the frequent perversion of these institutions from their avowed and legitimate objects.

(10.) "That the practice of settling disputes by arbitration between masters and workmen has been attended with good effects; and it is

desirable that the laws which direct and regulate arbitration should be consolidated, amended, and made applicable to all trades.

(11.) "That it is absolutely necessary, when repealing the combination laws, to enact such a law as may efficiently, *and by summary process, punish either workmen or masters who by threat, intimidation, or acts of violence,* should interfere with the perfect freedom which ought to be allowed to each party, of employing his labour or capital in the manner he may deem most advantageous."*

The 5th Geo. IV. c. 95 is very important as showing the policy and effect of the present statute (6th Geo. IV. c. 129), which was substituted for it in the following year, and which was stated to have been framed on the same principle. The preamble to the 5th Geo. IV. cap. 95, is as follows :—

"Whereas, it is expedient that the laws relative to the combinations of workmen, and to the fixing of the wages of labour, should be repealed, and certain combinations of workmen should be exempted from punishment, *and that the attempt to deter workmen from work* should be punished in a summary manner, Therefore," &c.

By the first section all the statutes against combinations of workmen are repealed.

By the second section it was enacted,—That journeymen, workmen, or other persons, who should enter into any combination to obtain an advance, or to fix the rate of wages, or to lessen or alter the hours or duration of time of working, or to decrease the quantity of work, or to induce another to depart from his service before the end of the time or term for which he was hired, or to quit or return his work before the same should be finished, or, not being hired, to refuse to enter into work or employment, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any manufacture, trade, or business, or the management thereof, should not therefore be subject or liable to any indictment or prosecution for conspiracy, or to any other criminal information or punishment whatever under the statute law.

By the third section it was enacted,—That if any person, *by violence to the person or property, by threat or by intimidation,* should wilfully or maliciously force another to depart from his hiring or work before the end of the time or term for which he is hired, or return his work before the same should be finished, or damnify, spoil, or destroy any machinery, or prevent any person not being hired from accepting any work or employment : or if any person should wilfully or maliciously use or employ violence towards the person or property, threats or intimidation towards another on account of his not complying with, or conforming to, any rules, orders, resolutions, or regulations made to obtain an advance of wages, or to lessen or alter the hours of working, or to decrease the quantity of work, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any manufacture, trade, or business, or the management thereof, or if any person by violence, &c., should wilfully or maliciously force any master or mistress, manufac-

* See Parl. Deb. N.S. vol. xi. p. 811.

turer, his or her foreman or agent, to make any alterations in their mode of regulating, managing, conducting, or carrying on their manufacture, trade, or business: Every person so offending, or causing, procuring, aiding, abetting or assisting in such offence, being convicted thereof in manner thereinafter mentioned, should be imprisoned only, or imprisoned and kept to hard labour, for any time not exceeding two calendar months.

The language of this statute clearly showed its object and policy. It was the intention of the Legislature to relieve workmen from all liability to punishment for merely engaging in combinations or strikes, such liability having been considered to be the cause of those outrages and violent proceedings which workmen had so often resorted to when disputes arose, either between them and their masters, or between them and their fellow-workmen. Accordingly, notwithstanding the statement in the preamble, that it was the object of the statute to prevent workmen deterring other workmen from work, they are yet expressly permitted, by the second section, to enter into combinations to induce others to depart from their service, &c., or to refuse to enter into work, &c. The object of the insertion of this clause must have been to allow workmen to "strike against" other workmen, rather than that they should "deter them from work" by the employment of those means to prevent which summary powers of punishment were given to the magistrates by the third section.

No sooner, however, had the Legislature changed its policy and removed those prohibitions to which associations of workmen had formerly been subjected, than "strikes" on a large scale, and obstinately conducted, immediately occurred in various parts of the country. Workmen seemed, as it were, to take the hint given them, and to indulge freely in the exercise of their new powers. The Legislature was terrified at what seemed to be the consequence of their own act, and the following year it again took the subject into consideration, now become a more difficult subject for legislation than ever. At first it seemed almost inclined to go back to the policy of former times, and to re-enact the old combination laws. But towards the end of the session the panic had subsided. The liberal policy of the preceding year survived the trial, and all parties were contented with a reproduction of the statute of that year, with some alterations in its shape and intended effect.

Mr. Wallace, who introduced the bill, thus states in what manner and to what extent the present statute (6th Geo. IV. c. 129) was intended to differ in its effect from the 5th Geo. IV. c. 95:—

"He was no friend to the combination laws; but he *wished that the common law as it stood before should be again brought into force; this he believed would be quite sufficient for the purpose.* —The principle of the bill now before the House was to make all associations illegal, excepting those for the purpose of settling such amount of wages as would be a fair remuneration for the workmen. He knew it had been objected that this was not enough, but

he thought it was safer to point out the description of association that was legal than to specify all which were illegal, in doing which there was great danger either of putting in too much, or of leaving out something which might be necessary. *The bill of last year was the same in principle as this;* but it went a little further, and this, he apprehended, was the cause of the inconvenience now universally felt." *

The preamble to the present statute is as follows:—

(1.) "Whereas an act was passed in the last session of Parliament, intituled, &c., by which act various statutes and parts of statutes relating to combinations among workmen for fixing the wages of labour, and for regulating or controlling the mode of carrying on any manufacture, &c., were repealed, &c., and whereas the provisions of the said act have not been found effectual: (2.) and whereas such combinations are injurious to trade and commerce, dangerous to the tranquillity of the country, and especially prejudicial to the interests of all who are concerned in them: (3.) and whereas it is expedient to make further provision, as well for the *security and personal freedom* of individual workmen in the disposal of their skill and labour, *as for the security of the property and persons of masters and employers*, and for that purpose to repeal the said act, and to enact other provisions and regulations in lieu thereof: be it therefore enacted," &c.

By the first section, the 5th Geo. IV. c. 95 is repealed.

By the second section is re-enacted that section of the former act by which all the statutes against combinations of workmen were repealed.

The third, fourth, and fifth sections are as follows:

III. "And be it further enacted that from and after the passing of this act, (1.) if any person shall by violence to the person or property, or by threats, or by intimidation, or by molesting, or in any way obstructing another, force or endeavour to force any journeyman, manufacturer, workman, or other person hired or employed in any manufacture, trade, or business, to depart from his hiring, employment, or work, or to return his work before the same shall be finished; or prevent or endeavour to prevent any journeyman, &c., not being hired or employed, from hiring himself to or from accepting work or employment from any person or persons; or (2.) if any person shall use or employ violence to the person or property of another, or threats or intimidation, or shall molest or in any way obstruct another for the purpose of forcing or inducing such person to belong to any club or association, or to contribute to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty, or on account of his not belonging to any particular club or association, or not having contributed, or having refused to contribute to any common fund, or to pay any fine or penalty, or on account of his not having complied, or of his refusing to comply with rules, orders, resolutions, or regulations

* See Parl. Deb. N.S., vol. xiii. p. 1400.

made to obtain an advance or to reduce the rate of wages, or to lessen or alter the hours of working, or to decrease or alter the quantity of work, or to regulate the mode of carrying on any manufacture, trade, or business, or the management thereof: or (3.) *if any person shall by violence to the person or property of another, or by threats or intimidation, or by molesting, or in any way obstructing another, force or endeavour to force any manufacturer or person carrying on any trade or business, to make any alteration in his mode of regulating, managing, conducting, or carrying on such manufacture, trade, or business, or to limit the number of his apprentices, or the number or description of his journeymen, workmen, or servants:* every person so offending, or aiding, abetting, or assisting therein, being convicted thereof in manner hereinafter mentioned, shall be imprisoned only, or shall and may be imprisoned, and kept to hard labour, for any time not exceeding three calendar months.

IV. "Provided always, and be it enacted that this act shall not extend to subject any persons to punishment, who shall meet together for the sole purpose of consulting upon and determining the rate of wages or prices, which the persons present at such meeting or any of them shall require or demand for his or their work, or the hours or time for which he or they shall work in any manufacture, trade, or business, or who shall enter into any agreement, verbal or written, amongst themselves for the purpose of fixing the rate of wages or prices which the parties entering into such agreement, or any of them, shall require or demand for his or their work, or the hours of time for which he or they will work in any manufacture, trade, or business; and that persons so meeting for the purposes aforesaid, or entering into any such agreement as aforesaid, shall not be liable to any prosecution or penalty for so doing, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding.

V. "Provided also, and be it further enacted that this act shall not extend to subject any persons to punishment who shall meet together for the sole purpose of consulting upon and determining the rate of wages or prices which the persons present at such meeting or any of them shall pay to his or their journeymen or workmen for their work, or the hours or time of working in any manufacture, trade, or business, or who shall enter into any agreement, verbal or written, among themselves for the purpose of fixing the rate of wages or prices which the parties entering into such agreement or any of them shall pay to his or their journeymen, workmen, or servants, for their work or the hours or time of working in any manufacture, trade, or business; and that persons so meeting for the purposes aforesaid or entering into any such agreement as aforesaid shall not be liable to any prosecution or penalty for so doing, any law or statute to the contrary notwithstanding."

By the other sections of the statute, one justice of the peace is empowered to exercise the summary jurisdiction given by the act, and other provisions are made as to witnesses, &c.

ABSTRACT
OF
THE MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
ON
THE COMBINATION LAWS,
TAKEN BEFORE A
SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN 1824.

PREPARED FOR
The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,
AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By PHILIP H. RATHBONE.

THE circumstances under which the House of Commons appointed, in 1824 a Select Committee "to inquire into the state of the law in the United Kingdom, and its consequences respecting artisans leaving the Kingdom, and residing abroad; also into the law and its consequences respecting the exportation of tools and machinery; and into the state of the law and its effects, so far as relates to the combination of workmen and others to raise wages, or to regulate their wages," are stated in the "Sketch of the History of Legislation in England respecting Combinations," which has been reprinted by permission of the author, from Mr. Longe's "Inquiry into the Law of 'Strikes.'" The results of the inquiry are also there exhibited.

The following paper contains a digest of the evidence, so far as it bore on the Combination Laws taken before the committee, such parts of it only being omitted as it has been found convenient to incorporate in other reports.

The witnesses examined included representatives of, or persons in some way or other connected with, the following Trades.

ENGINEERS AND MACHINE MAKERS.

IN this trade, as in others, the number of apprentices whom a master might rightfully take was a matter of dispute between employers and their workmen. Men brought up to ordinary machine-making were not allowed to work at the machinery required in the cotton trade, and a Manchester engineer and machine-maker explained that he felt it useless to oppose the wishes of the men with regard to engaging competent workmen who had been brought up to a nominally different occupation. An engineer who employed from 1000 to 1,500 men invariably required every man to sign an agreement to work on trial for a fortnight. At the end of that time he offered the man the wages which he considered him to be worth, and if the latter thought them too low, he had the option of declining to en-

gage himself. "It has been the practice," says the employer in question, "in every carpenter's or joiner's shop" (he is speaking of pattern makers) "to pay every man 30*s.* per week, whether good, bad, or indifferent; they wanted to carry this same system into our employ, but we would not act upon it; whereas I have some carpenters that I give two guineas a week to, others 36*s.*, others 33*s.*, and so on, and others even below what an ordinary carpenter gains. We have found, therefore, that those men have never attempted, in our manufactories, to conspire; for every man is impressed with the idea that the moment he can work better and quicker, he will have his wages increased, and I have frequently six or seven applications on a Saturday for increased wages, as by their attention and good conduct they become more valuable, and expect to be compensated accordingly. All that is necessary is to have a law obliging parties to do that which they agree to do." The results of this system are finally summed up thus: "We have not had in twelve years one single dispute, although I have employed 1000 to 1,500 men in that period." Another witness gave evidence tending the same way, but the method which he took to break up the old system of uniform wages was different. He *first* went to the cleverest men in his employ and told them they were worth more wages than they asked, and raised their wages; then, and not till then, he reduced the inferior workmen. The employer first referred to says: "In all those manufactories where the wages are the same, it is no uncommon thing for a man to receive from his master double the wages he has earned. But in engineer shops, new men's wages are generally fixed after working a fortnight on trial: we give as much as we can afford to the most expert men, and thus bring down their reward upon that standard; but in the business of a millwright, all the men have two guineas a week, and a man of that class was formerly employed to turn a grindstone, while one at 18*s.* a week would have done as well. The consequence is that engineers have become millwrights, and we make our machines so much better, and so much cheaper, that the trade who used to scoff and spurn at the name of engineer are obliged to take up the name and conduct this business by the engineers' economy." It was mentioned that in many cases provisions were rendered much dearer to the workmen than they otherwise would have been, owing to the larger profit required to cover the credit rendered necessary by the uncertainty involved in strikes. The Combination Laws did not prevent different trades aiding each other; for example, the Newcastle colliers had assisted the Manchester machine-makers. In one instance a combination had been suppressed by appeal to the laws. Though not approving of combination either among masters or men, few, if any, of the employers objected to the repeal of legal prohibition. One of them indeed frankly declared his belief that such repeal would be of the greatest benefit to both parties. The improved character of the men during the last twenty years, and the diminution of drinking habits among them, were strongly asserted.

LONDON TRADES:—TAILORS, HATTERS, SHOEMAKERS, CARPENTERS, AND BUILDERS.

1. *Tailors.*—Of the unions in these trades, the Tailors' was asserted to be much the most powerful. Journeymen were divided into two classes, named respectively "Flints" and "Dungs." Flints were those who were paid a uniform rate of wages by the day; and Dungs those who were paid sometimes by piecework and sometimes by daywork. The former class was about four times as numerous as the latter. A Flint's day's work was, however, practically piecework, a certain stated quantity being given out to be finished within the day. The Flints had more than twenty houses of call, each of which elected a delegate, and these delegates chose four others. The four were technically called the Town, and possessed almost unlimited power of ordering strikes. The whole body never discussed the propriety of a strike through fear of the Combination Laws. The Town announced the rate of wages to be accepted by the men, who implicitly obeyed. As in their struggles the men were generally successful, it may be inferred that the Town used its power with considerable discretion. In the other trades a strike was a very difficult thing to accomplish; the workmen disliked having recourse to it; and the women (being the greatest sufferers) always used their utmost influence to prevent it.

An entire want of confidence, and a disposition towards mutual annoyance, were said to characterize the relations of masters and journeymen tailors.

2. *Printers.*—Among the printers a much healthier and more cordial feeling prevailed. This was due to the fact of the masters having stated to the men in 1816 that they had come to the determination under no circumstances to avail themselves of the Combination Laws. This resolution was communicated at a time when a difference had arisen as to wages. The result was a compromise, which eventually satisfied both parties. In this trade more soreness existed on the masters' side from the limitation of apprentices than from disputes about wages.

3. *Hatters.*—The following particulars were stated with respect to the trade of hatters. Journeymen hatters were divided into "fair" men and "foul" men; "fair" men were those who had served seven years' apprenticeship in a fair shop, *i.e.* one in which there were no more than two apprentices. Shops in which this number was exceeded were denominated "foul." The fair men of London subscribing to the club were variously estimated at from 600 to 900. A tramp who arrived in London with a "blank," or certificate, from any of the societies of the different towns of England, Scotland, and Ireland, in correspondence with the London club, received *5s.*, a bed for three nights, and two pints of beer. In other towns assistance was given to a "blank" holder in proportion to the size of the place. If a man left his work unfinished, or injured his master, he was fined by his union. Offences against the laws of the club were also punished by fines, which ranged from one guinea up to ten guineas. If they

were not promptly paid, the man was discharged. As no man could obtain work in a fair shop through the three kingdoms, without presenting a travelling blank, and as the foul shops were not more than one in twenty, and the wages in them were lower, the power of the society was very great—"so great" indeed that an instance was mentioned where an apprentice having "served foul" was obliged to serve over again. As the number of apprentices was irrespective of the number of workmen employed in each house, the stock of workmen was kept up by the little masters spread over the country. A little master had often work for no more than two apprentices and himself. The men appear, as a rule, to have been wholly or partially successful in their strikes.

There was an exception in 1820, when a change in the shape of hats, which then came into fashion, led to a strike; the masters on that occasion prosecuted twenty-four of the men under the Combination Laws. Much bitterness of feeling was the result of this step. In 1794, previous to the passing of the Combination Laws, a strike for an advance took place and was successful. In 1802, a strike against unfair men failed. In 1810, a strike for an advance was successful. In 1817, a strike for an advance was compromised, and after the strike already alluded to most of the masters gave the wages asked. In none of these disputes does there appear to have been any violence or intimidation. The masters did not stick together nearly so well as the men. This circumstance, together with the fact that the men generally chose spring as the time to turn out, gave the latter a great advantage. The wages in the brisk months of the year appear to have ranged from 50*s.* to £3 a week gross, and to have been about 42*s.* and upwards per week net, after deducting what was payable for picking, which was an extra expense, except when a man had a wife to do it for him. The payment was by piecework. Wages in the flat months were estimated by one witness to be about 25*s.* gross.

4. *Boot and Shoemakers.*—The boot and shoemakers of London formed four distinct associations: men's bootmakers in the City, numbering about 600 members, and in Westminster, numbering from 700 to 800; and women's shoemakers of the East and West Ends respectively. The number of shoemakers who did not belong to the London and Westminster clubs was estimated at from 5000 to 6000, so that the club men were in a considerable minority. These associations were in correspondence with seventy or eighty others in different parts of the kingdom. Each association was divided into four or five "shops' meetings," who each sent delegates.

The average weekly earnings were set down by one witness as about 26*s.*, payment being by piecework; but at the West-end wages were somewhat higher than at the East. The chief feature in the evidence concerning this trade was the tyrannical use apparently made of the Combination Laws by the masters, although they appear to have had meetings regularly once a month themselves. In one case a master answered a summons for payment of work already done by a summons under the Combination Laws; in another, an employer called nineteen

of his men together, detained them under pretence of sending out for beer, and sent for twenty-four officers to take them into custody. They were sentenced to a month's imprisonment and a fine of £1 1*s.* each. There was no violence or intimidation, and the men throughout were perfectly quiet and orderly, as indeed appears to have been always the case in disputes between master and men in this trade. There was in this trade no express stipulation as to the number of apprentices a master might take, but had an extravagant number been taken, the men would have objected. The men themselves might take only one each.

5. *Carpenters.*—The carpenters of London formed four different societies, numbering altogether about 2,500 members. These societies insured tools from loss by fire or thieves, and allowed £5 burial money; but there was no allowance for sickness or loss of employment, men in want owing to either cause being supported by voluntary contributions. This trade had no "strikes," only "stands," which, however, appear to have come to exactly the same thing. In 1800, wages were from 20*s.* to 22*s.* per week; they then rose gradually to about 26*s.* or 27*s.* in 1810, in which year there was a strike for 4*s.* per week, which lasted five weeks, and was successful. In 1816 there was another strike of fourteen weeks, to resist a reduction of 3*s.* per week, in which the men had to give in; but in 1818 they recovered 2*s.* of it without a "stand," although the masters had resolved to refuse: some of them began to give the wages demanded, together with a *present* of 2*s.* to each man. The common complaint that the masters were not as true to each other as the men, was urged by one witness. The strikes in this trade do not appear to have been so free from violence as those of the shoemakers and hatters, and intimidation and destruction of tools seem to have prevailed to some extent. Three men were sentenced to one month's imprisonment, and two to twelve months, under the Combination Laws, in 1816; but it appeared on examination that some amount of violence had been used. On the other hand, the almost singular case occurred in this trade of the men prosecuting the masters for combination, in which they failed, though their counsel considered that they had been dealt so unfairly by, their case being fully proved, that he felt himself bound to return his fee. The masters examined, while objecting to the Combination Laws, were extremely anxious for stringent laws giving summary power to enforce the finishing of work half-done, and to provide for the fulfilling of contracts.

The general character of the men in the London trades was stated to have much improved during the previous twenty years, and drinking was stated to have decreased to a great extent.

THE COTTON TRADE, GLASGOW.

The operatives engaged in the cotton trade belong to two very different bodies, the spinners and the weavers. In 1824 a large proportion of the weaving was still carried on by hand-looms, but power-

looms were rapidly superseding them, the latter being worked almost entirely by women. The Scotch weavers in 1809 applied to Parliament, in conjunction with those of Lancashire, for a bill to limit the number of apprentices, and fix a term of apprenticeship. In 1811, they made a similar attempt alone, and in both cases committees of the House of Commons were appointed, and gave the matter careful attention; but the application was rejected, though Mr. Whitbread gave his support to the movement. Upon this failure the operatives turned their attention to certain old laws, empowering justices of the peace to fix the rates of wages. They called upon the Sheriff of Lanarkshire, in conjunction with the magistrates of Glasgow, to call a meeting of the trade for the purpose of appointing two committees, one of masters and one of men, who were accordingly appointed, and after many discussions came to no result, the masters refusing to recognise in any way the principle of fixing wages.

The operatives then had recourse to proceedings under some old Acts of Parliament, passed previous to the Union, but confirmed in the reign of George II. The masters disputed the relevancy of the acts, and competency of the Court; but finally both were affirmed by the Court of Session, to whom appeal was made, and the case was remitted back to the Quarter Session, for the judges to go into its merits. One hundred and thirty witnesses were examined, besides the masters and workmen of ten other trades, including blacksmiths, shoemakers, common labourers, &c., whose wages, ranging from a *minimum* of 12*s.* per week, up to 25*s.* per week, gave an average of 18*s.* 4½*d.* A statement was at last come to, giving 13*s.* 9*d.* per week as an average, the *maximum* being 28*s.* 6*d.*, and the *minimum* 8*s.* The masters refused to bring any counter evidence, and eventually repudiated the decision of the justices;—while the operatives' counsel having, apparently in deference to the wishes of the Court, withdrawn the imperative part of the prayer, the decision became merely declaratory and not binding. The action continued from January, 1812, to November, on the 10th of which the final decision was given; and a week after, about 30,000 looms struck in one day, and 10,000 followed soon after. The men were out six weeks. The strike appears to have been extremely peaceable, except that a few webs were destroyed, either by sharp instruments or by vitriol, and parts of some of the looms were concealed, so as to render them, for the time being, useless. The authorities interfered, and prosecuted the leaders of the strike, in consequence of which, as the operatives believed, they were obliged to give in. This practically broke up the association, and the wages sank at different periods excessively low. The rate in 1824, the time of this inquiry, was from about 8*s.* to 10*s.* per week, on an average. The character of the men appears to have been always good, being peaceable and moral.

The combinations of the spinners were, however, of a very different character. Owing to their being congregated in large numbers in the different factories, the spinners had much better opportunities of

combining than the hand-loom weavers. Their wages were very good, being on an average above 30*s.* per week, in 1824. They began to combine in 1806, and about 1810 their combination took a serious form, on which occasion the masters stopped all their mills and would not re-admit any of the operatives without their signing a declaration that they would not be concerned in any illegal combination, and would not interfere with their employers as to whom they should employ. From 1810 to 1816 the Union was quiet, but in the last-named year a revival of agitation was perceptible, and in 1819, 1820, and 1823 a series of outrages was committed of the most brutal and atrocious character. A great number of threatening letters are quoted in the report, of which the following extract will give some idea :—

"*August 9th*, 1823.

" We have given you long enough time to gether money to pay your expenses back agian to Belfast, therefore, we hope you will lave the wheels that you are on at presant to men that have a better right to them than you, on Monday first, and if you do not atten to this, will sarve you like Linzie Phillips.

"This we swaer by the living God.
"Signed by the Captain of the Blood Red Knights."

(Then the representation of a hand holding a sword with a pierced heart, two pistols, a coffin, &c., with death's head and cross bones.)

Another of the letters is signed " Captain of the Vitriol Forces."

A third is dated " nine miles below hell." Others contain allusions to the judgment-seat of Christ and other sacred things, mingling the most disgusting profanity with the most revolting atrocity.

Another is a demand by Mr. Houldsworth's operatives that, as Mr. Dyson and James Fisher are too vigilant, they shall be reprimanded before the men ; and that Mr. Russell shall be discharged, " being no judge of his business :" and also that J. McKenzie Phillips may not be admitted in future. This Phillips was subsequently " vitrioled," his face burnt in places to the bone, and the sight of one eye destroyed.

Nor were others of these letters mere empty threats. Several mills were set fire to: one manufacturer, writing in 1821 from Paisley, said that scarcely a night passed in Johnston without shots being discharged ; and the lowest depths of cowardly brutality were reached, in vitriol-throwing and woman-beating. The manufacturers struggled against this system of terrorism. One manufacturer, Mr. Orr, built houses for his workpeople and set a guard over them, notwithstanding which, shots were fired into the works; and one night, on the eve of his marriage, he was told he was wanted, and on inquiring at the door " who was there ?" two or three pistol-shots were fired at him, which, fortunately, owing to his shadow having deceived the assailants, did not reach him. Tired of quarreling with his men, one of the manufacturers hired women, and built a mill with machinery specially adapted to them ; but the women were beaten,

and one old woman so severely that she died three days afterwards. The same manufacturer armed all his men with pistols and cutlasses, which enabled them to go to and from their work with comparative safety. Finally he bought a factory in America and sent his son out to superintend it, who built another there; but the radical disturbances seem also to have hastened his resolution to do so. It may be as well to cite one case of vitriol-throwing as a specimen.

Alexander Fisher was shot at when in bed about one o'clock, Aug. 2nd, 1820; the shot lodged near the bed, and some of the glass was driven into the children's bed. He was again shot at on the 16th of September, about two o'clock in the morning. On the 29th of November, two men waylaid him on his way to work at six o'clock in the morning, and threw a quantity of vitriol over his face and breast, which burnt him dreadfully. On the 14th of December, he, having only just attempted to resume work, was again shot at while at the mill. On the 4th of January he was still without the use of his left eye. This man had a large family dependent on him. It would be needlessly painful to go into any further instances, as great sameness runs through all of them, but their frequency was perfectly appalling. Of course the organization of the Union was kept very secret, and therefore no information could be gained concerning it. Large rewards were offered for the conviction of the offenders, but without result, and a proclamation was issued requesting the chemists to take the name, and note the person, of any operative buying vitriol. The masters asserted that the Society kept wages 25 per cent. above the market value. It is right to remark that two operatives who were examined placed the wages at 26*s.* instead of 30*s.*, and entirely repudiated the notion that the unions had anything to do with the outrages; but the systematic character of these offences renders it extremely improbable that they were all isolated crimes. It must not, however, be inferred that the whole body of men were of so bad a character as these atrocities would lead one to infer; they were described by one of the masters as "the great mass of them men of good moral dispositions and good moral conduct, but . . . controlled by others of restless and dissipated characters." And it was stated that it was when wages were high, and not when they were low, that combinations were most rife. It is not necessary to point out the extraordinary difference between the combinations of the weavers and spinners. Both classes were engaged in the cotton manufacture, and yet in the relative amount of their wages, and in peaceableness and moderation of conduct, they were strongly in contrast.

LANCASHIRE WEAVERS.

The history of the weavers of Lancashire very much resembles that of the Glasgow weavers, but their wages were even lower, being 5*s.* 6*d.* and 7*s.* per week, or about one-fifth what they were in 1797. In 1818 one of the factory owners reduced the weavers one penny per yard. The other masters intimated that there was no necessity for

this, upon which the weavers combined, and regained the penny, and also added another penny. Encouraged by their success, they held a deputy meeting to consider the advisability of asking an advance of *2s.* in the pound. Some of the masters had a meeting of their own on the same day; and those that came agreed to the advance, but proposed that it should take place by instalments. To this the workmen agreed, at a meeting of deputies from the cotton-weavers of Lancashire, Yorkshire, Cheshire, and Derbyshire. The president of this meeting was a man who had attended at the request of his employer, Mr. White, and two resolutions were passed which were recommended by Mr. White, the first recommending the acceptance of the compromise, the second to the following effect: "That as it is in the power of the manufacturer to compel the weaver to weave out his work in the loom or on hand, he is advised in such case to obey the dictates of the law; yet no injunction is hereby laid upon him by this meeting, and he is left entirely to his own discretion; but he is not to bring any more work from any manufacturer under the proposed advance mentioned in the first resolution.

"Signed, ROBT. ELLISON, *Treasurer.*
"RICHD. KAYE, } *Secretaries.*"
"ROBT. PILLINGTON, }

A fortnight after, when the men had all gone to work, the president and two secretaries were arrested by a warrant from the bench of Manchester magistrates, and obliged to find bail to the extent of £400. Ellison's employer procured bail for him, but when he surrendered for trial he was condemned to twelve months' imprisonment, though his own master gave evidence in open court that he himself had recommended the passing of the obnoxious resolutions.

The wages of weavers varied in different districts more than in most trades, because a man owning his loom could not remove it from one part to another. It must not be forgotten that power-looms were rapidly being introduced, but one reason that hand-loom weavers objected to send their children to the factories was that by them the children were placed out of their supervision, while a father employed in hand-weaving could often give his children considerable instruction.

THE CLOTH-WORKERS OF LEEDS.

THE cloth-workers of Leeds and the towns of that district appear to have had no combination until 1819, when the weavers struck for wages both at Leeds, and at Dewsbury, about eight miles from Leeds. The wages at Leeds are stated to have been from 20*s.* to 25*s.* per week, and the strike was to prevent a reduction of about 5*s.* per week; it lasted six months, and was entirely unsuccessful. The strike at Dewsbury, at the same time, was on the other hand successful, but it should be mentioned that a different kind of cloth was made there. In 1821 there was another strike, which lasted till the end of 1823, one mill only being called out at a time. This strike

was also successful. At the end of 1822 a general association was formed of the cloth-weavers and spinners of Yorkshire, to keep up the rate of wages. This association consisted of some 5000 men. During this period the men were perfectly aware of the illegality of their proceedings, but seem to have observed very little secrecy; yet not one master, during their prolonged struggles, availed himself of the Combination Laws, and the magistrates, besides discouraging any idea of doing so, exerted themselves to bring about an arrangement. No violence or intimidation was used on the part of the workmen, nor was any workman countenanced who left his work suddenly, without finishing what he was about.

THE LINEN-WEAVERS OF KNARESBOROUGH.

THE linen-weavers of Knaresborough in 1815 turned out to resist a reduction of 1*s.* per forty yards. They stood twelve weeks, and then the masters gave in, but some time after the latter effected a reduction of 2*s.*, and in 1816 another strike took place to resist a further reduction of 1*s.* The strike lasted twelve weeks, when the masters gave in, but succeeded a month or two after in reducing the men without a turn-out. In 1823 another strike took place, which lasted twenty-eight weeks, to resist a further reduction of from 2*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. The men were beaten. Since 1805 the Combination Laws had not been put in force, but in that year three men were sent to Wakefield gaol for three months, one of them for carrying a letter to York requesting assistance. The masters, however, in 1823 published an abstract of the Combination Laws as a warning. In all these strikes there appears to have been no violence nor intimidation whatever.

THE SILK-WORKERS OF MACCLESFIELD.

THE silk-workers of Macclesfield appear to have had no combination until, on 30th March, a placard was issued, signed by all the masters, increasing the hours of labour from eleven to twelve, but making no mention of increase of wages. An open-air meeting of the trade was held upon the 3rd of April to resist this, to which the mayor came down, and requested that they would appoint a deputation to meet him on Monday, the 5th, the day when the masters' notice came into effect. A deputation of fourteen accordingly met the mayor, and he endeavoured to persuade them to accede to the masters' terms, and asked the grounds of their refusal. They said that to work an hour more was equivalent to so much reduction of their wages, but chiefly insisted that eleven hours were already too much for their children. The mayor then called a meeting of masters, and a deputation of the workmen met them and discussed the subject for a considerable time. The masters now appear to have offered additional wages for the additional hour, but whether they intended to give them from the first does not clearly appear; at any rate, the men thought not. On Tuesday morning the conference was continued, but broke up without result, as the men believed the additional wages would be knocked off at the end of a short time, and

of course no wages touched the question of their children's health. The inhabitants appear to have sympathised strongly with the mill-men. A crowd collected round the hotel-door where the meeting of masters and workmen was held on Monday evening; the Macclesfield cavalry came to disperse them, but beyond knocking down an old lady, and considerably damaging their horses' knees by riding over some chains stretched across the road, which was being repaired, they do not seem to have done much good or harm. Stones were thrown, but not by the men on strike, and two or three persons were taken up for rioting, but these were not workmen who were out. The people were quite peaceable and quiet till the cavalry came down upon them.

On Tuesday morning the mill-men published an appeal to the town for subscriptions, and on Wednesday the masters published a notice entirely withdrawing their former one, which closed the matter. Mill-men's wages were from 6*s.* to 14*s.* per week, a maker-up of silk had about 20*s.*, women 5*s.* to 5*s.* 6*d.*, children of six 1*s.* 6*d.*, and in proportion. One fact is worth noticing, that the men never went to work on Monday morning, which, considering their low wages, seems strange.

LIVERPOOL SAWYERS.

THE sawyers' society was a benefit society of from 200 to 250 members. The proceedings of thecommittee appear to have been carefully concealed from the general body. The ship-sawyers of Liverpool, in 1816, struck for higher wages. The masters took the opportunity of reducing their wages. To this the men had finally to submit, after a strike of twenty-two weeks, in which they were supported by other towns, and members of their own trade who had not struck. These reduced wages continued until 1823, in the September of which year the men again struck for an advance from 42*s.* to 48*s.* per pair, and this strike was going on at the time of the examination in March, 1824, the sawyers having daily meetings in the fields near Liverpool. The work was sometimes paid by the piece, sometimes by the day. By piecework, men working sixteen hours a day sometimes earned 55*s.* or even £3 per week per pair; day wages were 42*s.* per week per pair. The top-sawyer was to some extent a skilled labourer; but the pitman not being so, it was stated that the wages were unequally divided between the pair; and though doubt was thrown upon the statement, which indeed was entirely denied by one operative sawyer, yet, as it was universally admitted that top-sawyers paid the pitmen, it seemed probable that some arrangement for an unequal division of wages would be frequently come to. The masters employed the apprentices during the strikes in sawing, and also introduced new sawyers into the town, who in 1823 were much abused, and one man was murdered by three others, his skull being fractured. A man was hanged for this murder at Lancaster. Many of these attacks were made by sawyers in the disguise of carters. This violence among the ship-sawyers was con-

fined to the strike of 1823, as there was little or no violence in 1816, nor did it manifest itself till the men had been two months on strike. One of the masters' yards was set fire to, and that particular yard was chosen which, according to the direction of the wind, would be most likely to fire other yards. In January, 1824, the men addressed the mayor with a statement of their grievances, and the masters replied by a counter-memorial to the mayor; but nothing seems to have come of their applications. It should be remarked that sawyers' wages were stated to be lower in Liverpool than elsewhere, but the work was more regular. It was not only among the ship-sawyers that violence took place, for in 1821 one man was hanged and another transported for shooting a house-sawyer through a partition.

STOCKING-MAKERS.

The stocking-makers of Leicester combined in 1817, on the instigation of some of the masters, to procure an advance of their wages, which had been gradually falling for years; but the men had not ventured to resist, owing to several having been imprisoned in 1813. The men met the masters, and presented to them a list of prices, which the masters considered and altered, and the men agreed to the alterations. The masters, in their turn, complained that the parish-officers were in the habit of giving premiums to certain masters for employing paupers, and this was put a stop to. Very soon, however, one master after another began to reduce again, and in 1819 wages had sunk to about 7*s.* per week for a good workman, working fourteen to fifteen hours; in Nottingham it was worse, there from 4*s.* to 5*s.* was the average. The combination had been entirely broken up through fear of the law, but in that year the men struck, to the number of 14,000. The Lord-Lieutenant, and the members for the county, subscribed funds, sermons were preached in the parish churches, and a benefit was given at the theatre in support of the movement, and after nine weeks they secured the statement of 1817, which they had struck for. Some of the men were brought before the magistrates, but the magistrates dismissed them, and everybody seems to have been on the men's side. In Nottingham alone £800 was subscribed. The peaceable behaviour of the men was testified to on all sides, not a pane of glass was broken, nor any violence whatever offered to any one. The moderation of the men seems equally beyond question. In 1821 the committee of the Nottingham Stocking-Makers' Union was arrested, there being another strike which lasted six weeks, to prevent a second attempt at reduction; but the prosecution was quashed, in consequence of an informality of the most technical kind. In 1822, at Leicester, some of the masters hinted to the workmen that they had better be laying up funds to enable them to resist any attempted reduction; and in 1823, at Nottingham, in consequence of the manufacturers in general departing from the statement a third time, some of the leading houses again requested "the men to make a stand to recover them again." It is remarkable,

that when there were no combinations, frame-breaking took place in Nottingham to a great extent.

The history of the stocking-makers at Howick was different in some respects. In 1819, the masters wished to reduce the wages, and the men appealed to the justices to fix the rate of wages, as by law they had the power to do. The justices admitted that they had this power, but declined to use it. The men then prosecuted the masters for combining to reduce their wages, and though the sheriff declared they had fully substantiated their charges, nothing came of it. In 1821, the masters attempted a further reduction, when the men struck, and remained out twenty-eight weeks; at the end of the period, twenty of them were arrested, but they procured a "line" from the chief magistrate, another magistrate, and the minister and chief elder of the Kirk, certifying the perfectly peaceable conduct of the men during the twenty-eight weeks—upon which the sheriff discharged them. Wages in 1824 were from 8*s.* to 10*s.* The men seem to have submitted to reductions when they believed trade was bad; but when they saw new hands rushing into the trade, they naturally considered that profits were good, and objected to any reduction. In 1824, they had a fund, to which they paid 3*d.* per week, for assisting those out of employment.

BIRMINGHAM TRADES.

A QUOTATION from one of the witness's evidence will be the best *résumé* of the information concerning the Birmingham trades.

"The Birmingham trades are so peculiar in their nature, that it is next to impossible for anything like a combination on the part of the masters to exist in the place. In fact, if there is a spot in the world in which perfect community of interests between workmen and their employers is to be found, that spot is Birmingham. If, for instance, I take the manufacture of brass foundry, which is a leading manufacture, employing a larger number of hands and a much greater capital than many trades, I do not think there are twenty brass founders in Birmingham who employ so large a capital as twenty thousand pounds each; but there are hundreds of brass founders who are at work on a capital of perhaps less than five hundred pounds; for one man makes a drawn knob, another a *commode* handle, another a bell pull, &c. So that, though there may be but few who manufacture every species of brass foundry, yet I think I may say that the most voluminous pattern-book of the most extensive manufacturer in Birmingham does not contain a single article which a man without fifty pounds may not go and manufacture; and in such a state of things as this, it is quite impossible that masters should combine to the injury of the workmen; for if the masters agree to pay less than their journeymen require, the man has nothing to do but go and manufacture the article himself.

"A friend of mine some years ago engaged in the silver-plated trade. On looking over his new manufactory, and seeing a very costly and extensive collection of dies, I congratulated him on being

engaged in a business where he was not likely to meet with competition from persons who had no capital, and consequently not labouring under any of the burdens of a large establishment. He told me, some time afterwards, that I had been entirely mistaken, for that stamps and dies for almost every article he manufactured were made and let out for hire. For instance, a careful man who has saved eighty or a hundred pounds (which a clever and thrifty workman may soon do) erects a stamp, or a couple of presses, to which, as his little capital increases, he adds perhaps a set of dies for a teapot, a candlestick, or some other staple article, in which it is ten to one that he closely copies (in fact makes his own counterpart of) some favourite pattern, to design and perfect which has recently cost some master manufacturer a great deal of trouble and expense. This machinery and these dies and tools he lets out, at a sufficient profit to himself certainly, but at a rate which enables the artisans who hire them to manufacture many of the most saleable articles at prices that utterly defy the competition of those from whose profits must be deducted rent, taxes, poor-rates, clerks' salaries, and fifty other encumbrances, inseparable from a large manufactory, and of which the artisan knows nothing. This is a state of things which not only tends to reduce the profits of capital, whilst it enhances the value of labour, but renders it quite impossible for the master manufacturer to exercise the slightest control over the just rights and claims of his workmen. Some time since, two or three burnishers went into the counting-house of a respectable button manufacturer, who has a very large establishment, and peremptorily required the immediate dismissal of a confidential clerk, who had said or done something to offend them. The master requested them to leave that part of the business to his own superintendence, and return to their workshop. Within half an hour afterwards, he was told all the burnishers had left him. He directly called several of his brethren in the button trade, informed them of the circumstance, stated that he had orders on hand which required immediate completion, and begged they would be good enough to burnish his buttons for him. They kindly engaged to do so; but before night, his buttons were all returned to him, for, as his mark was known to the trade generally, there was not a button manufactory in the town where the men were not acquainted with the fact in a few hours, and they all refused to touch his buttons. So that the man's own manufactory (and it was a large one) was completely stopped, and a great number of hands in the other departments were thrown out of employment. Finding remonstrance ineffectual, he summoned them before a magistrate, who convicted them in some slight penalty; and the men appealed against the conviction to the quarter sessions; but the day before the sessions commenced, their solicitor persuaded them to withdraw their appeal, and return to their work, and they did so. I am not aware that they paid the penalties, and I do not think they succeeded in getting the objectionable clerk removed; but I cannot speak confidently of the fact. I have never heard of violence in a Birmingham manufactory."

IRISH WOOLLEN MANUFACTURES.

In the woollen manufactures of Ireland, combinations seem to have attained a very considerable height; they were in connexion with the Board of Green Cloth, a committee which probably included other trades, and which levied fines with much severity. The expression of one of the masters was, "They legislate for us." The evidence states that the wages were higher in this trade in England than in Ireland, though provisions, as a rule, were cheaper at the latter place. They were quite up to the system of only striking part of the trade at a time, and carried it out in general. The words of one of the masters, describing his differences with his workmen, will best tell what else of interest about this trade was given in evidence.

"The difference of 1815 was their resistance to an attempt on my part to lower their wages; they struck; Mr. Bankes' men had struck a little before, and they succeeded in the object they had in view. I resisted, with a full determination to suffer my factory to stand altogether, rather than to give way to their efforts. They remained out about six weeks; during this period every attempt was made on the part of those who turned out, to prevent those who were well disposed from working. I believe the whole of them were not inclined to turn out, but the majority were determined not to suffer any person—no matter whether mason, or bricklayer, or smith, or any other trade which I carry on within myself—to work, or repair the factory. I might have gone on repairing my factory while it was standing from combination, but they would not suffer any millwright or mechanic of any description to work. If they attempted to repair, they met with insult. I was anxious, if I could not be fishing, to be mending my nets, but those men were waylaid and assaulted, and in several instances very much hurt, so much so, indeed, that the remainder were deterred from working. Frequent acts of violence were committed by the majority, but I was unable to bring any to justice. They got tired; they were starved, in fact, into submiss on. All their funds were exhausted, and then it was a matter of difficulty how they should get in, or who should enter first. They were aware that whosoever should enter first would be murdered; that would be the inevitable result. In this difficulty they applied to a brother churchwarden, and they asked his advice. 'Boys,' said he, 'you have heard the factory bell ring morning, noon, and night for the last few weeks, and would not go to work. I will tell you; it strikes me in a moment; you will assemble to-morrow morning round the factory gates, and let those that are outside push those that are next the gates in.' 'Excellent!' They immediately resolved upon this expedient, and met in very considerable numbers about the gates, and those who were outside pushed the others in, and they ran to work, helterskelter, in every direction, although some few remained out threatening vengeance and murder. I did not attempt to put the Combination Laws into execution against the men this time. I found

it was expedient to work and single out those characters that were obnoxious, that I had reason to believe were at the bottom of this business, and I ridded my concern of them at my own convenience, not at any particular time. When I had reason to find fault, I took an opportunity of saying, 'I do not want any more of your work,' and got rid of them in this way by degrees. They have me a little in dread. They know I am a decided character. I believe the men obtained supplies from other trades during that time, but not sufficient to keep them up; being the largest factory in the kingdom, it was not easy for the other factories to support so large an establishment, nor were they indeed prepared. I believe they make weekly payments; there is a weekly collection, but to what purpose the funds are applied, I do not know; but it still exists. It is not under the title of a benefit society; those societies are encouraged by me, also savings' banks, or anything that will extract money from their pockets for their own benefit. I believe they have no connexion with any societies in England. I had a slight difference about wages six months ago. I understood, after the turn-out at Mr. Williams's factory, and after the Messrs. Williams had acceded to the wishes of their men, that it was the determination of my men also to turn out on the same principle. I found it necessary to check this in the bud. The moment I heard of it, I ran down to Colbridge, and I ordered the watchman for the night to turn out the hands employed through the night—they work day and night in part of the works—at an early hour, and not to suffer any hand, nor any superintendent even to enter the works without my express directions. He did so; he turned out the men at an early hour; he did not ring the bell as usual, which was an ominous thing. The people assembled, the works were dark and perfectly silent; they were astonished, of course. They assembled round the gates, and when I thought I had succeeded in effecting a little panic, I sent a note saying that I understood their intention was to make an alteration in the rate of wages; if they had anything to say to me, I should be happy to see a deputation of their body, that is, of the weavers, spinners, and slabbers; that the deputation might wait on me at eight o'clock. And accordingly they assembled in great numbers and sent down a deputation of nine. I ought to state, also, they were objecting to my employing the son of a labourer as an apprentice to the mules. When they waited upon me, they told me that they could not think of working with this labourer's son; they also had some objections to the wages: but they would waive any objection they had on the score of wages, but they could not think of working with this boy. I told them I conceived it was a bad principle on which they were proceeding, that the son of a labourer, merely because he happened to be the son of a labourer, should not have work as well as the son of a tradesman (which they call themselves). They said they could not think of it: it was contrary to their rules. I told them that I certainly must insist upon anything I thought right; then they begged I would put what I said on paper, and

they would lay it before the body. I did so and they took it up to the body and there was a very strong discussion—they could be heard a mile off; they were going to fight. But at length a deputation of about twenty-four came down and they still objected in the most decided way to my employing this boy. I told them I must and would employ the boy, and whomsoever I chose; but with regard to him, if they would go to Shaw, the superintendent of the spinners they would find I had written a note to him a few days ago that might satisfy them that he would not be employed in that particular business; but I reserved to myself the right of employing him at any future time. They went to Shaw, and found the note that I had written desiring that the boy might not be employed in that particular branch; they came, and expressed their gratitude, and the affair ended there."

MISCELLANEOUS DUBLIN TRADES.

THE trades of Dublin and the neighbourhood were combined together to the number of about fifteen or sixteen in a union, but it does not distinctly appear whether this was the committee known as the board of "Green" cloth. It discussed what measures were to be taken against colts, or those who were non-society men. The masters were in such terror of the combinations, that in many cases of violence they did not like to prosecute, and as the offence was a bailable one, the witnesses were generally tampered with, and threatened in the interval, and it was extremely difficult to procure a conviction.

DUBLIN CARPENTERS.

The Carpenters in Dublin numbered between four hundred and five hundred in society, and two hundred and three hundred irregular men. There were four general fields or meetings (so called from taking place in a field) in the year; five men were chosen every three months by the field, one each representing Ulster, Munster, Connaught, and two for Leinster. These met twice a week, to take into consideration grievances and receive subscriptions. The entrance fee was two guineas, but it was only on rare occasions that any man who had not served seven years was admitted. The third rule of their constitution forbade working for less than 4*s.* 4*d.* a day within certain boundaries, or 5*s.* beyond. By rule 3 no Dublin member of the community was allowed to take an apprentice except a son, brother, or nephew.

By rule 7, no master was allowed more than three apprentices; by another rule no country, or, as it was called, club apprentice was allowed to serve with a Dublin employer either the whole or part of his time. The society was bound to apprentice four orphans annually, with a premium of ten guineas each. Any member of the council office known to be intoxicated was fined from 5*s.* to 20*s.*, according to the discretion of the field—a fine stated to be frequently levied. Any member obliging others to turn out against him by his

opposition was to be fined 34*s.* 1½*d.* For replacing any member or members on turn-out (presumed to mean general turn-out) the fine was £3 8*s.* 3*d.*, or for replacing one on turn-out for non-payment of wages, £1 2*s.* 9*d.* The two former fines were generally mitigated in amount.

Piecework was strictly forbidden, on the ground that it enabled the masters to reduce wages, and it was stated that there were cases where non-society men on piecework earned only 18*s.* per week. The rules were sworn to by a very stringent oath. The society was also a benefit society, but in times of struggle the sick and burial funds completely went to the wall. The society defended all men prosecuted for trade assaults or "slatings," as the term was, and maintained them and their families while they were in prison. One builder, who had never had any difference with his men with regard to wages, was applied to by a gentleman in the north of Ireland to take his son as an apprentice, with a premium of sixty guineas. He answered that he could not take him without the sanction of his men. He consulted his men, who declared that there could be no objection to the new apprentice, upon which he was bound. Some time after, they came and said they were ordered by the field not to work with the new apprentice. Mr. Carolan (the master) refused to dismiss him, and they then tried to compromise, by demanding the dismissal of another boy. To this also Mr. Carolan said no, and his men left him, all except three, whose wages Mr. Carolan took the opportunity of raising the Saturday night following. He sent to Scotland for others, upon which the old men began to return; they induced the new hands to join their body. In June, 1820, they again objected to work with a man named Johnson, and Mr. Carolan knew that, having succeeded in that, they would object to two of the men named Ruxton, who had remained with him during the former strike; he refused, allowed them to strike, and again sent over to Scotland for men. As before, the two Ruxtons remained with him. The newcomers were not molested, but as one of the Ruxtons was going to work, in Talbot-street, he was met by from eighty to a hundred men, who attacked him with bludgeons, called slaters, about two feet six inches long, round at one end, to hold in the hand, and square at the other. Ruxton had a small saw in his hand, and defended himself as well as he could. Mr. Carolan, who was in the yard, hearing the cry of murder, went out. Mr. Carolan had a case of pistols, loaded with shot and ball; he fired, and wounded four or five, especially a tailor, named Delaney (men of one trade were often employed to slate a man of another); he then sprung a bayonet attached to one of the pistols, and wounded another man, named Macdonnel, who died in consequence. He then gave information to the police, who went to the hospital and there found Delaney, and a charge was lodged against him, but he was bailed out by stag (or false) bail, and disappeared. Mr. Carolan, however, one day chanced to meet him, and took him up himself, and he was tried; but what was the result does not appear. Mr. Carolan was tried for murder, and acquitted, the

prosecution being paid for by trade funds. The brother of Ruxton did not escape so easily; he was attacked by a number of men, and so beaten with slaters that he was left for dead. The next year, Mr. Carolan's son having been considered too strict in keeping the men to time, a friend of his was attacked in mistake for him, and had to run some seven hundred yards for his life. He was under the doctor's hands about three weeks. Eight men were convicted, and sentenced to nine months' imprisonment for this offence. A witness named Murray was indicted for perjury, but the grand jury threw out the bill. Two years afterwards about eighty or one hundred men, who collected under cover of listening to a fiddler, waited till Murray came out of the Duke of Leinster's, where he was working, and then set upon him with slaters, and he was sent to the hospital, and was insensible for several days. No one was prosecuted for this attack. I should mention that after the eight men who attacked Mr. Carolan's friend had been in prison six months, they wrote to him acknowledging the justice of their sentence, on which Mr. Carolan procured a remission of the rest of it from Government. Finally the Carolans succeeded in bidding defiance to the trades' union. In another case, where a poor man was beaten to death, in mistake for another, the two brothers were so much afraid that they petitioned for pardon for a man sentenced to transportation for the offence, which petition was granted. It must be remarked that the Dublin police seem to have been remarkably able and efficient, in comparison with the police of other towns of that day.

In 1813, an English coachmaker was employed by Messrs. Hutton; he was a polisher, and extremely clever, so that the men who worked under him were able to earn 5*s.* per week more than those in other shops. The coachmakers objected to him on two grounds, firstly because he was an Englishman, and secondly because he was introducing new and improved processes. He was waylaid, beaten with spokes, and stabbed with bayonets, and crippled for life so as to be unable to earn his livelihood, and Messrs. Hutton had to maintain him ever after. They were not however men to sit down quietly under such a thing, and they never rested until they had discovered the perpetrators of the outrage, and secured for them a year's imprisonment, and exposure in the pillory. It cost them £450, but they found it cheap, in the tranquillity which it secured to them afterwards.

The cabinet-makers of Dublin appear to have been a highly respectable class, the premium for apprenticeship being £100; the wages were from 20*s.* to 24*s.* per week, the work being piecework. The feeling between masters and men seems to have been very good, and differences were comparatively rare. One case of prosecution by a master who had been a workman, was mentioned, for simple combination, when the men were sentenced to a month's imprisonment. There were no printed rules, only written ones. The chief rules were, no man to work without having served seven years' apprenticeship; no employer to have more than two apprentices; and no man to work under the

stated rate of wages. The society was not a benefit society, though called the Samaritan Society. It was simply for trade purposes, but though illegal, the employers do not seem to have looked upon it with any great aversion; and when on one occasion the chief constable had the men attending a meeting arrested, the employers came forward to bail them. Indeed they professed that their object, though primarily to defend their own interests against the masters, was also to defend the interests of the masters against unprincipled journeymen. Many of the masters on receiving the bill of a journeyman were in the habit of sending it to the trades' society committee to be taxed, after which the word committee was stamped upon it. One case was mentioned, when between two and three pounds were knocked off a bill of about eight pounds, by the trade committee. Formerly there had been an employer's committee as well as a men's committee, but the former seems to have fallen into disuse. In 1816, the men submitted, apparently with a good grace, to a reduction of 2*s.* 6*d.* in the £1. In this trade, however, they suffered from the fact that the best men, owing to the combination laws, did not like to take the offices of stewards and presidents, and run the risk of having their names connected with the police-court, so that these offices were filled by the less moderate and sensible men. In this trade there however seems to have been no violence at all. The number of the society was from eighty to ninety in Dublin.

The calico printers, previous to 1810, had many differences with their men; but in that year a sort of convention was entered into between masters and men, and a scale of prices was agreed to, distinguishing between easy and difficult work, so as to give a fair reward for ability. No employer engaged a man without a certificate from his last shop, which stated his character. This plan worked extremely well till 1817, when some of the masters began to depart from it, and especially to fuse the two kinds of work. The consequence of the reduction of wages was, that the best workmen went over to England. The calico printers seem to have been a superior class of workmen.

The saddlers of Dublin were formed into a benefit society called the Halifax Society; there were no trade regulations in their printed rules, but in their written rules. The rate of wages was fixed in 1812 from 30*s.* 6*d.* for first-class work down to 26*s.* for third-class work, by a meeting of the masters and men in the Exchange, and the relative value of piecework was also determined then. In 1816, business being in a declining state, the masters reduced the wages, with a promise that they should be raised in better times. The reduction was submitted to, though not without some slight quarrelling. When better times came, the men claimed the promised rise, to which all the masters acceded cheerfully, except one, whose men struck. He brought them, under the Combination Laws, before the magistrates, who advised a compromise, and the men returned to work, the master giving the prices. In 1822 there was a question of reduction again, and the masters presented a list of prices for both piecework and day work to a deputation of clever men, who met them in the exchange. The

masters proposed that the list should be discussed by a committee consisting of three masters and three men, whose decision should be final. The men, however, objected to one of the masters named, because he employed "colts" in his office. They directed twelve of their best men to report upon the proposed list, who modified it, and then the amended list was presented to the masters. The masters took till the end of the week to consider the amendments, and then turned out about half the men, taking in others said to be imperfectly up to the business. Some of these were severely beaten. The masters then took out summonses against the eleven men who had met them in the exchange, and the men took out counter summonses against five of the masters for meeting contrary to law, according to their own published documents. The magistrates directed both parties to find bail, and sent the cases to the quarter sessions, when the bill against the masters was ignored, but that against the men was found. It may be well here to remark that not much faith seems to have been placed by workmen generally in the justice of juries, they declaring that employers were often put upon them, and men never. The men then prosecuted the masters for the following conspiracy: In 1821 an army accoutrement maker, named White, got an order for saddlery, for the first Royal dragoons, the colonel saying that were it satisfactorily carried out, according to sample, he would probably get all the work of the cavalry regiments made there, it having been hitherto all done in England. Mr. White made arrangements with the journeymen saddlers, with which, the terms being very advantageous for them, they were perfectly satisfied. The master saddlers met their men and told them that if they worked for Mr. White, who was not a regular master saddler, they could not be employed by regular masters again; and partly by persuasion, partly by threats, they succeeded in inducing the men to refuse to work for White. The business was accordingly lost to Ireland. The masters were so frightened by their last prosecution, that they immediately compromised the matter and settled amicably with their men. They seem after that to have gone on very quietly, with the exception of one shop, where the master quarrelled with his men about a foreman; they left his employ for a few hours; he took out a summons, under the Combination Laws, against them; but on the men writing an apology, he by letter accepted it, and the matter was dropped, until, on another difference, he induced Government, who at that time were very much alive to the evils of intimidation and conspiracy, to prosecute for the same offence which the master had previously forgiven; but upon discovering that it was the same offence, the Government abandoned the prosecution. In this and other trades, the magistrates appear to have adopted a wise and conciliatory policy, advising and forwarding compromises, whenever there seemed to be room for such.

By an act of the Irish Parliament, 11 & 12 Geo. III., the wages of the trades of shipwrights and tailors were determined by the decision of the recorder and magistrates of Dublin; and in 1810 they were

fixed at not less than 3*s.* 4*d.* for the worst men, and not more than 4*s.* 6*d.* for the best men, a master being liable, by the terms of the act, to a penalty for paying more. It is unnecessary to say that this law was evaded whenever there was any reason for doing so. The number of shipwrights in Dublin was at that time from sixty to seventy, but had much declined of late years, owing partly to want of capital, and to trade having gone elsewhere, but also very much to the bad understanding between masters and men, not so much as to the amount of wages as to the question whom the masters were at liberty to employ.

Another act enabled the Dublin society to fix the wages of the silk weavers. Whipping was, in Ireland, a punishment for combination; and under 3 Geo. III. c. 34, a man might be convicted before one justice of combination, on the simple oath of a master (if believed by the magistrate) that the man had quitted his work before the time for which he was retained, or had refused to work with a particular man, &c. &c., and might be sentenced to six months' imprisonment and to be three times publicly whipped. Whipping, however, had fallen into disuse, and nine or ten years had elapsed since a man had been whipped for this offence. Personal service of a summons was not required. Proof of its having been left at the place of abode of the party summoned, twenty-four hours before hearing being sufficient.

The evidence as to some other trades heard by the committee does not require re-statement here, as it merely presents facts similar in kind to those brought out elsewhere more fully.

ABSTRACT

OF THE

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE

TAKEN BEFORE A

SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS APPOINTED IN 1825,

TO INQUIRE INTO THE EFFECT OF THE

REPEAL OF THE COMBINATION LAWS

ON THE CONDUCT OF WORKMEN AND OTHERS IN DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By FRANK H. HILL.

THE circumstances which led to the appointment of the committee of 1825, on the Act 5 Geo. IV. c. 95, are stated in Mr. Longe's "Inquiry into the Law of 'Strikes,'" a portion of which is reprinted in this volume. One result of the investigations of this committee was the Act 6 Geo. IV. c. 129, passed in the same session of Parliament, and still in force. The following paper contains a brief abstract of the more important evidence taken before the committee, by whom representatives of the following trades were examined :—

- Collieries of the Newcastle District.
- Scotch Collieries.
- Dublin Trades.
- Seamen.
- Paper-Makers.
- Ship Builders.
- Cloth Trade.
- Coopers.
- Spinners.
- Weavers.

The Sheriffs Substitute and Depute of Renfrewshire and Lanarkshire were also examined with respect to combinations of workmen in those counties.

The evidence concerning the Ship Builders' Unions is incorporated in the special report on that trade.

NEWCASTLE COLLIERIES.

[Witness examined :—A Colliery Engineer in the Newcastle District.]

IN 1810 there was a most obstinate strike (or, as it was called there, "stick") among the colliers of this district, during which a large military force was called in to aid the civil power. Much violence was committed, and one soldier was stabbed. The strike took place at the orders of, and was conducted by, a secret committee. After "sticking" for a month, the colliers came in, without having gained any of their points.

The men in 1810 had a system called "brothering," so named because the members of the Union bound themselves by a most solemn oath to obey the orders of the brotherhood, under the penalty of being stabbed through the heart or of having their bowels ripped up.

After the strike of 1810 the colliers remained quiet, though there had been a slight reduction of wages in 1814, until the repeal of the Combination Laws, very soon after which they began to form themselves into a Union. Delegates from the different works, and from the different trades in connexion with those works, including the carpenters, sawyers, and blacksmiths, held secret meetings. The season, however, was not favourable for an advance, and they therefore, up to April, 1825, were still biding their time. The wages of a collier in full employment were from about 4*s.* to 7*s.* a day. They worked by taskwork.

A singular feature in connexion with the management of the Newcastle collieries was "the limitation of the vend." The colliers, as has been mentioned, were paid for taskwork, and when in work could earn from 4*s.* to 7*s.* a day; but the in work was very uncertain. In order, however, to prevent them asking exorbitant wages in times of pressure, the coal-owners were accustomed to hire them for a year, guaranteeing them 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, whether there was work for them or not. This system, of course, made the masters anxious to spread the demand for coals more equally over the year, and in order to insure a more regular supply, an agreement, binding generally for a year or six months, was made among them, not to ship more than a certain proportion of coals per month from each of the collieries included in that agreement. The limitation of vend was not a restriction of absolute quantity, but a proportion calculated according to the probable consumption during six or twelve months, and assigned to each coal-owner, according to his power of working, beyond which he was not to ship. On the average, pitmen were allowed to work five days in the week, or eleven days in the fortnight—five men on four days' work, and five men on three days' work,—according to the requirements of the coal-owners. This system was said to be peculiar to Newcastle. There was no occasion for it in other parts of the country, where men were hired by the day or the week. It became necessary where men were engaged at a certain rate during the whole year, as in the Newcastle district.

COOPERS.

[Examined:—Two Master Coopers; and two Working Coopers.]

THE number of coopers in London is said to have been 1,500, of whom 700 were enrolled in a benefit society, called "The Friends of Humanity." There was a separate fund to support men out of employment, whether from strikes or from any other cause. A man might be a member of the benefit society without being a member of the Union; and there were members of the Union who were not members of the benefit society. His Majesty's coopers of Portsmouth and Deptford were in the same Union; but they were not

communicated with on occasion of a strike, and would not be required to strike with the London coopers. Though there were no secret oaths, declarations, and subscriptions, there were other rules than those printed, which there was an agreement not to make public, and on which only evasive answers, conveying no information, could be obtained by the committee.

With regard to apprentices, there is some difference between the statements of the masters and workmen. An employer stated that "by their (the workmen's) regulations as to apprentices, they had so reduced the number of workmen, that the masters were completely in their power." "They would not suffer any one to be taken apprentice but a cooper's son." On the other hand, a working cooper denied that the masters were at all limited, either by rule or in practice. The regulation not to take any other apprentices than the sons of coopers, applied, he said, to the journeymen and not to the masters; and the journeymen, for a certain allowance, were willing to instruct masters' apprentices.

The entire absence of any threatening or violent conduct on the part of the workmen was fully admitted by all the witnesses.

There is great conflict of testimony on other points. On the one hand, it was asserted that a penalty of £5 is inflicted if a man moved a hammer after he had heard there was a strike; that coopers from Ireland would not (the experiment does not seem to have been tried) be suffered to work; and that a man was scouted out of the yard if it is found that he had worked under price. Again, it was said that members of the Society would not suffer men from the country to work with them, nor themselves work with masters (of whom there were not more than three or four) who employed such men. On the other hand, it was alleged that no strike had ever occurred because men who were not members of the Society were admitted into a shop; that unionists would not go out nor compel the non-members to go out, but if the latter refused to become members—though they would not be obstructed—yet the whole thing might be made so disagreeable to them, that probably they would not wish to remain in the shop. The society men might refuse to "truss" with them. Another witness denies that the non-members have ever been subject to any inconvenience or met with refusal to "truss."

For the last twenty years there were continual disputes, not always issuing in strikes, with the working men about wages, in which the men invariably carried their point. Strikes occurred in 1808, 1813, and 1816; and in the current year 1825, one was impending. The list of prices was regulated according to the price of the quartern loaf, but the men afterwards refused that standard. With the exception of 1810, when a reduction was made, the men obtained an advance in all these years. An agreement existed that notice of a proposed alteration on either side in the list of prices should be given only in February; and that the lists agreed on should be valid from year to year. The men professed to consider this as only a temporary arrangement, and departed from it in 1825, when they made a demand for a new statement in March. They proposed an

alteration of wages, "so that all men, be they at what work they might, might earn about the same average," though not independent of their skill; and they also wished to reduce the number of hours for piecework, so that "all men should be employed, instead of some being out of employ and others doing a great deal too much." The workmen alleged that the extra labour thrown upon them by the use of heavier staves and heavier iron work, made the list of prices hitherto in force no longer suitable. The masters maintained that they were not able to raise the prices of these articles in a degree at all commensurate with the increased cost of labour and raw material; and that if coopers from the country could be obtained, they would not, without previous instruction, even in the case of good workmen, be competent for the work of the London coopers.

No combination had existed on the part of the masters for some years. They met rarely and irregularly, as special occasion might arise.

The wages of the journeymen coopers were differently stated by masters and by men. According to the latter, the best workmen, working thirteen hours for six days, could earn £2 10*s.* or £3. According to the former, £5, or, in some cases, £10.

PAPER MAKERS.

The only information brought before the committee with regard to the paper makers, is contained in the rather meagre evidence of a journeyman from Kent.

The society of paper makers consisted of 1000 members in Kent and 2000 more in other places. Its object was to give material support to persons out of work, by furnishing pass tickets to tramps, and by aiding men on strike.

Strikes which took place in consequence of diminution of wages, were supported by the Society. During a strike the allowance was 4*s.* to a woman, and 2*s.* to a child; there was no allowance to men. The allowance to the women and children was continued till the man on whom they depended got work. Strikes occurred also in consequence of the refusal of an advance, and were supported by the clubs. Formerly it was necessary before striking to apply to the central committee in Kent; but this was not the practice at the date of the evidence given. There have never been any acts of violence.

The working paper-makers had a rule that no more than one apprentice should be allowed to each vat, to which for two or three years the masters had agreed. There were, however, more apprentices than this rule contemplates in many mills. Individuals had ceased to work, but a turn-out on account of apprentices had never been supported. No factory had been "laid still" in consequence of a dispute about apprentices. There was no regulation in the club to restrict working without a certain number of apprentices. No strike had ever taken place for the purpose of forcing any regulations upon the master with regard to the conduct of his trade. The Society regulations affect only wages. The conduct of working paper-makers was uninfluenced by the Combination Laws, since they had no knowledge

either of their existence or their repeal. The strike in 1825, in some parts of England, was to obtain the rate of wages paid in Kent, and to gain back a reduction made some nine years earlier; trade being brisker and provisions dearer. Instead of enforcing or yielding to a strike, some mills worked on credit, or gave two or three shillings advance till the proprietors saw what other masters will do.

CLOTH TRADE AT WAKEFIELD.

[Examined:—A Master Manufacturer.]

In different answers, the witness contradictorily referred the first formation of a combination among his workmen to September, 1822, and November, 1824,—admitting that the former was previous to the repeal of the Combination Laws, and yet stating afterwards that, according to his belief, there had been no combination before the repeal of those laws, and that it was the repeal which tempted his men to form themselves into an association. Strikes occurred among his workmen at the two times referred to. In September, 1822, about forty men out of four hundred, turned out for an advance of wages,—taking advantage of the master's having a contract to be completed in six weeks. On November 20th, 1824, all but two men struck, demanding an advance on their wages of 25 per cent., although the witness was paying more than his neighbours, on whom no demand was made. If he had conceded this, the workmen would have struck elsewhere. Fifty or sixty men, of whom twenty were new men, came in afterwards at the old prices. People were threatened as they came to work, and money offered them to stay away; but no actual violence was done, save in the breaking of an old woman's windows, and the destroying of a man's garden. The foreman, having been annoyed by two men, thought it necessary to carry pistols, and a guard was set on the mill. Lodgings were refused by cottagers to the men who came back, called "blacks," nineteen of whom received bed and board in the manufacturer's house. Those who turned out received 9*s.* weekly and 3*s.* for each child, from a fund raised among the employed workmen by subscriptions of 1½*d.* and afterwards of 3*d.* a week. The money came from a committee sitting at Wakefield. Since the 20th of November, the work in witness's factories was carried on with a reduced number of hands. It was of a character to require training; consequently children were employed, who generally left work with their parents. The strike referred solely to wages; no attempt having been made to interfere with apprentices or with the conduct of the works, except that some of the "slubbers" threatened to leave on three children who had quitted work being re-employed. The work was all done by piece, the wages ranging from 20*s.* and 25*s.* to 30*s.*, 35*s.*, and even £2 a week. "Those who received the most wages were the worst people to deal with." Other turn-outs are mentioned which led to a slight increase of the rate of wages.

The masters had no combination, and did not even meet to consider the rate of wages to be paid for the different kinds of work.

SEAMEN.

[Examined:—Six Shipowners; two Officers of the Royal Navy: Secretary to Shipowners' Society; and six Seamen.]

In the year 1815, great disturbances took place on the Tyne, and in the northern ports, owing to demands made by the seamen, and resisted by the shipowners. The former insisted on having £5 per voyage, that every ship should carry five men and a boy for every hundred tons, and dictated as to the persons to be employed as foremen, watermen, &c. They committed great acts of violence, "stopping the ships for about six weeks, boarding the ships when going away, taking the men out and ill-treating them," ducking them, tarring and feathering them, carrying them on a stick and jumping them up, &c. Ten sail of King's ships, five hundred marines, and four regiments came down; and some of the men were prosecuted and imprisoned both for combination and violence. The seamen had a committee, at the head of which was a person whom they called the Admiral, and whom they implicitly obeyed. No one was allowed to sail from port without a ticket from the committee. The disturbances arose from the fact, that discharges from the navy, consequent on the termination of the war, had greatly increased the number of unemployed seamen.

The evidence, of which a short account follows, refers chiefly to a union, established in 1824 in the ports of the Tyne and Wear, but which had in May, 1825, extended southwards, as far as Yarmouth, and northwards to Leith, and which, beginning with the colliers, seemed likely to embrace the seamen of the entire merchant navy, and even of the Royal Navy.

With a view of evading the character of illegality, the rules of the Union — so far as it was more than a benefit society — were drawn up in the form of a dialogue between Tom and Harry, this shape being chosen, because, as one of the witnesses explained, "we did not intend any harm, but we were not acquainted whether there was any harm or not." The members of the Union refused to enter vessels in which any of the seamen were unconnected with the Union, or in which the mate was not a member of the Union; and the delay occasioned to shipowners by this conduct, with the difficulty they experienced in obtaining crews, induced them in almost every case to yield. The seamen further objected to heave out ballast, to fit out ships (in consequence of which riggers had to be employed), to scrape ships, to strip the lower mast, &c. Those of them examined as witnesses expressed their willingness to waive the point of requiring the mates to be members of the Union, in consideration of the inconvenience of the mates being amenable to the Committee of the Union should they be called on to take the command of the vessels through the captain being disabled. The seamen examined further explained that they did not object to undertake the above duties when their engagement and pay were by the month instead of by the voyage. In the latter case, the obligation is only "to do that which is necessary to navigate the ship from port to port;" though it had been customary for a man for the sake of his

situation to come and fit the ship out, without being paid for his work. The average time taken in fitting out a ship was a week, though witness had in one instance worked for twenty-eight days without wages. In different ports there was a different usage on this point; the seamen receiving their dinners and grog at Whitby and Shields, but not in Sunderland; and payment in neither. Wages were never given except by special bargain. When a man was engaged by the month, he expected to receive pay for every day's work; and the seamen held that they ought to be remunerated for attending the ship in harbour before signing articles, and for labourer's work, when employed on it, as discharging coals.

In case of accident at sea, seamen "were willing to put things to rights as well as they could, and bring the vessel to her place of destination." Instances alleged by the shipowners of the men refusing to do what was necessary in such emergencies are cited in detail; and contradicted point blank and in as much detail by the men. The case of the *Jane and Margaret*, from which, when grounded on the Mapler Sands, the seamen were said to have refused to throw out coal in order to lighten it, is a remarkable example of conflicting testimony.

Other regulations of the Union prohibited carpenters who were not regular seamen from acting as mates, owing to the number of accidents to which it was alleged that practice had given occasion. If a member of the Union took a comrade's berth (who had been dismissed for any other than a legal cause), he became liable to a penalty of 20*s*. The unionists sought to gain their end by a system of moral terrorism rather than of physical violence. The captain of the *Arno*, having in March, 1825, tried to obtain a crew of sailors not in the Union, the Union men "threatened the captain, and told him to tell his owner that if he took a crew of non-union men into his ship, that as he had several ships, he should not have men to go in any of them." Both captains and owners were afraid of becoming "marked men," and therefore yielded to the demands of the Union, knowing that if they did not, they could not obtain crews. If they succeeded in getting members of the Union committed, others would not take their places.

Some few acts of violence were alleged; a non-union crew was brutally ill-used at Sunderland, and the vessel cut adrift in the harbour. In North Shields, men not belonging to the Union were taken out of the ship, their faces blacked, and themselves hooted and ill-used. In the same place, "sailors were abused and ridiculed and called 'scabmen,' because they would not join the Union." These assertions were denied by the members of the Union examined before the committee; and it is allowed on the other side, that acts of violence were rare and exceptional.

The Union (to which almost all the sailors of the ports of the Tyne and Wear belonged) gave rise to a Shipowners' Protecting Society, the members of which agreed to indemnify each other for losses incurred in resisting the demands of the Union; but it was ineffectual.

The great number of apprentices taken on board ship, and its effect of leaving men on shore to starve, were considered grievances by the members of the Union; but no interference had taken place.

YORKSHIRE WEAVERS:—WAISTCOATING, SHAWLS, AND FANCY GOODS.

[Examined:—Three Employers and two Journeymen Weavers.]

BETWEEN September, 1824, and May, 1825, several strikes took place among the Yorkshire weavers of waistcoating, &c. for an advance of wages. One manufacturer was compelled to pay a fine of £100 to the Huddersfield Union, as compensation for the loss of time his men had incurred by standing out.

A manufacturer of waistcoat pieces, near Huddersfield, stated that on the Christmas following the first formation of the Union (in September, 1824), he called his men together and told them that he "had been too long a master to become a servant of servants;" that he "was quite willing, if they thought it necessary, that his weavers might meet among themselves, but that it was impossible he could stand against the weavers of all the trade, and therefore he was determined he would not employ any weavers who were in the Union." Twenty-four of his men put down their names to abide by the Union, and about forty to remain with him, all but three or four of the former bringing in their gear on the conclusion of the warp, and declining the master's offer to remain one, two, or three months, as they might choose, till they could find other work. "After three months' trial," the witness added, "I found it would be really impossible for me to keep on my business, if I did not allow them [the forty men who had remained with him] to enter the Union; and, as I did not wish them to be longer persecuted, I gave them permission." Up to the time of the step here described, the witness and his workmen had been on the best terms. Violence was not offered to the men who remained with him, but only intimidation by gestures and threats. A shawl manufacturer at Huddersfield, in addition to an advance of wages on a certain part of his manufactures, was compelled to remove another part to Stockport, "where," he says, "every possible obstruction was thrown in his way to making goods there by the men in the Union." Men whom he attempted to obtain at Huddersfield "conceived themselves in danger," and went about armed with bludgeons; one was once followed by three or four men, and "apprehended himself to be in considerable danger," though he sustained none. Several men were engaged from Stockport; but "the moment they made their appearance on the coach in the town (Huddersfield), they were waylaid by the members of the Union, and they were induced, by every statement that the weavers could give to them, to abandon the idea of coming into his employ; and in short, though they engaged in Stockport to come, they did not make their appearance . . . at all." No threat or violence was used. Two men were taken before the magistrates at Huddersfield "for going round when one portion of a master's men had struck to induce the others to strike."

What they said did not amount to threats. The magistrates came to the conclusion that they could not punish them. Brickbats were thrown at factory windows, and one man was violently assaulted; but these outrages were not conclusively traced back to the Union.

The Huddersfield Union spread over a district thirty miles in circumference, and contained about 5000 men. Members paid 3*d.* a week till their subscriptions reached £1; then the subscription ceased, except in case of a strike. The Union aimed at securing uniformity of wages, but did not object to the masters getting rid of a man who worked badly. Unionist and non-unionist men worked together in the same shop, without annoyances being inflicted on the latter. There were no secret oaths, meetings, or bye-laws. Wages and alleged unfairness in measurement, on the part of the masters, formed the principal subjects of grievance among the men.

FLANNEL WEAVERS AT ROCHDALE.

[Examined :—Two Operatives.]

THE Union at Rochdale, which in May, 1825, had existed about eighteen months, consisted of two or three thousand members. There had been only one strike (in December, 1823) before the repeal of the Combination Laws. In December, 1824, there was a strike, at the invitation of the Union, against a manufacturer who had reduced his wages below the statement of prices paid by the principal part of the manufacturers since 1815. "It was at the suggestion of the manufacturers, who paid to the statement price, that the strike . . . took place." "The weavers have done nothing of themselves without the approbation of the manufacturers." Twelve manufacturers, out of from forty to fifty, subscribed to the strike. In January, 1824, the employer in question, "in consequence of a meeting and communication between the two committees" of masters and men, signed an agreement to pay the statement price. Women were not allowed by the Union to work at weaving; legitimate sons of weavers need not be apprenticed; but all others must serve an apprenticeship of seven years. To prevent the trade being overstocked, no master was allowed to have more than two apprentices. No violence or intimidation had ever been practised or encouraged by the Union.

In December, 1823, the Union passed a resolution, to the effect that, on account of an over-production of goods in the woollen trade, "This meeting do expect that every weaver will cease working by candle, or any other artificial light, after Monday, the 15th instant." This resolution was passed because the manufacturers complained that the markets were overstocked, and "because a letter was sent to the meeting by a respectable manufacturer", requesting them to take that course for three months.

While the Committee of the House of Commons was sitting, a strike against another manufacturer, who had not only paid wages below the statement, but "had paid his wages in beef and mutton in lieu of money," was amicably settled.

SCOTTISH COLLIERIES.

[Examined:—Two Coalowners; two Working Colliers; and the Procurator-Fiscal of the Eastern District of Stirling.]

THE colliery districts of the west of Scotland appear to have been honourably distinguished from those in other parts of the kingdom, by the abstinence of the men from violence or intimidation during their strikes. Nor did the masters attempt to bring their disputes with their workmen to a close by taking legal proceedings against them. This apparent forbearance seems to have been due to the very general belief—which was entertained until a contrary decision of the Court of Justiciary—that the operation of the Combination Laws did not extend to Scotland.

In the case of a strike, the masters met the turn-out of the men by sending ordinary labourers down into the pits. This was done by Mr. Taylor, in Ayrshire, in 1817. No attempt was made to interfere with the new men working; and when the old hands came in again, such of the new ones as chose to remain were suffered to do so. Strikes, however, seem not to have been (between 1807-25) the means generally taken to secure a rise of wages. More frequently the colliers adopted the plan of "continuing to work, and endeavouring in every possible way to thwart the masters," as by "doing only half work, or for days declining to raise coal altogether," thus limiting the supply when he had a demand.

Associations of workmen of the Ayrshire Collieries were formed in 1817, and in 1824. This strike, undertaken at the bidding of the former, which was defeated by the introduction of new men, in the place of the turn-outs. In consequence, the principal objects of the second combination were, together with increase of wages and rectification of the measure, to exclude "people who were not colliers before but labourers" from entering the pits,—to effect which, the rule was adopted, that "no neutral man" (that is, no man whose father was not a collier) above the age of twenty years could engage to be a collier without paying £7 in hand. Still, if the master insisted in putting him in he would be allowed to work; "but," says another witness, "we would not learn them, if they did not pay our apprentice fee. It is admitted on behalf of the employers, that apart from this regulation, of the enforcement of which only one instance was adduced, the association did not interfere with the apprentices whom the master chose to take; though they objected to the introduction of other men from another colliery, unless they settled with the men of the colliery to which they came; that is, paid them some money. Over-men were not called on to become members of the association, nor were the superintendents of work ever interfered with.

With the exceptions above noted, the Association did not meddle with a master for employing any one whom he pleased, whether or not a member of the Association, at any wages he might think fit. Members of the Association were at liberty to work for reduced wages, though if they left their employment in consequence of such reduction, they would be supported by the Association for a fortnight, or until they found work. The Association does not appear to have had

funds permanently in hand, money having been levied only to meet an emergency. Hence, no members seem to have been struck off for refusing to pay, or being in arrears; nor were they in any way molested. The operative witnesses examined before the Committee deny that combination was in any way of a secret character, there being no private bye-laws or oaths, or other rules than those which appeared in the printed regulations of the society. Anybody might attend its meetings, though none but members did so. An opposite impression on the part of the masters seems to have arisen, from their confounding it with a distinct body, "the Brotherhood of the Colliery," which had nothing to do with strikes, or with the support of strikes.

Several masters determining not to employ members of the Association, and the masters generally agreeing not to employ men from other collieries who did not bring certificates of good conduct and of a discharge, men were induced to come in, and received on their renunciation of the Association.

During the strike, there was little violence, according to the masters; none at all, "not an angry word," according to the men.

OTHER COMBINATIONS IN SCOTLAND.

[Examined:—The Sheriff-substitute of Renfrewshire; and the Sheriff-depute of Lanarkshire.]

I.—RENFREWSHIRE.

PRIOR to the passing of Mr. Hume's Act, the combinations in Renfrewshire in which the magistrates had to interpose were—1. That of the weavers, between 1810 and 1812; 2. That of the calico-printers in 1814;—both of which, though marked by intimidation and violence, were yet free from gross acts of criminality or cruelty—and, 3. That of the cotton-spinners, from the year 1820 to 1823 inclusive. In December, 1820, an attempt was made to shoot Mr. Orr, manager of the Underwood cotton-mill at Paisley, on the night before his marriage, by discharging two pistols loaded with bullets at him, which missed him; in November, 1823, William Kerr, who had accepted work in place of Fullerton, dismissed, was shot at with a pistol loaded with small shot and wounded in the right arm and right thigh. In January, 1821, an attempt was made by one MacNicol to shoot James Henderson, a cotton-spinner. In September, 1823, Robert Todd, who had taken work in place of some persons protected by the combination, was shot at for the second time and wounded with small shot, in his own house, as he was stepping in to bed. He had previously been waylaid, in company with his wife and child, and severely beaten. The people by whom these crimes were committed were known by the name of "the Ring." They were also employed "to go backwards and forwards intimidating workmen by direct threats, written and verbal, and indirectly telling them to take care, to remember what happened in such another place, &c." In two instances, people were assaulted with oil of vitriol. Owing to the conviction of the assailants of Kerr and the offenders in the other cases mentioned; to the fact of a strike, to the support of which they had to contribute, being then on foot in Lanarkshire; and to the master cotton-spinners simultaneously stopping work,

thus putting down the combination for a time, and dismissing the ringleaders,—there had been for more than a year entire tranquillity.

It was customary to place sentinels before a shop which was obnoxious, or to collect in numbers around it, so as to warn off or intimidate the workmen, as they came to and left their work.

The evidence connecting acts of violence with the combination (when distinct proof or confession was not procurable) is to be found in the fact that such acts never took place at any other time than during a struggle between the workmen and their employers; that they were generally made by persons belonging to the same trade, and who were out of work at the time, having no visible means of livelihood, but nevertheless enabled to spend a good deal of money in drinking, and very generally strangers to the persons who were the objects of attack.

II.—LANARKSHIRE.

In Glasgow, since 1822, and before the passing of Mr. Hume's Act, there were four cases of throwing vitriol, frightfully injuring and deforming the sufferers. In 1823 there was a conspiracy among the power-loom weavers to assassinate one master and five spinning masters. At the same time a cotton-mill was attacked, and the military had to be called in. There were four cases of attempted assassination before Mr. Hume's Act, and three subsequently, all within four or five months (from May, 1825). The most remarkable of these was that of John Kean, who, with some others, was hired for £100 to assassinate John Graham and four masters, by the Committee of the Cotton-Spinners' Union of Glasgow. The oath by which the combined cotton-spinners bound themselves was in the following terms:—

"I, A. B., do voluntarily swear, in the awful presence of Almighty God, and before these witnesses, that I will execute with zeal and alacrity, as far as in me lies, every task or injunction which the majority of my brethren shall impose upon me, in furtherance of our common welfare; as the chastisement of knobs, the assassination of oppressive and tyrannical masters, or demolition of the shops that shall be incorrigible; and also that I will cheerfully contribute to the support of such of my brethren as shall lose their work in consequence of their exertions against tyranny, or renounce it in resistance to a reduction of wages. And I do further swear that I will never divulge the above obligation, unless I shall have been duly authorized and appointed to administer the same to persons making application for admission, or to persons constrained to become members, of our fraternity."

A select committee of three persons, whose names were not known to the operatives, were chosen by the district committees, and changed every two months.

No act of violence had been committed by other associations of Glasgow unconnected with the cotton trade.

The evidence taken by the committee with respect to combinations in Dublin, not presenting any characteristic features different from those brought out before the committee of 1824, it has not been thought necessary to include them in this abstract.

ABSTRACT

OF THE

EVIDENCE ON COMBINATIONS OF WORKMEN,

TAKEN BEFORE A SELECT COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN 1838.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By GODFREY LUSHINGTON,

BARRISTER-AT-LAW.

On the 13th of February, 1838, a Select Committee was ordered by the House of Commons to be appointed to inquire into the operation of the Act 6 Geo. IV. c. 129 (the Act, commonly called Mr. Hume's Act, repealing the Combination Acts), and generally into the constitution, proceedings and extent of any trades' unions or combinations of workmen, or employers of workmen in the United Kingdom, and to report their observations to the House. The appointment of the Committee originated in a discussion in the House of Commons, February 13th, respecting the conviction on January 11th of five Glasgow cotton spinners for conspiracy and illegal combination, and their sentence to seven years' transportation.

The Committee had power to send for persons, papers, or records. It consisted of the following members,

The Lord Advocate.	Mr. Milnes.
Lord Granville Somerset.	Mr. Hindley.
Mr. O'Connell.	Mr. Pringle.
Lord Viscount Lowther.	Mr. Wakley.
Mr. Charles Villiers.	Mr. Ward.
Mr. Hume.	Mr. John Young.
Sir Henry Parnell.	Mr. Poulett Thompson.
Mr. Crawford.	

In March Lord Viscount Lowther was discharged from further attendance, and Lord Ashley added to the Committee.

In June the Committee, after having examined several witnesses, reported to the House the minutes of evidence, which were printed by order and form the first report. In July a second report containing further evidence was printed.

The substance of these two reports is the subject of the present paper.

The Committee received evidence concerning the following trades;—

Cotton-spinners of Manchester, Glasgow, and Belfast.

Calico printers of Belfast.

Printers of Dublin and Ireland generally.
Shipwrights,
Canal Boatmen,
Builders, including
Bricklayers,
Sawyers,
Carpenters,
Plasterers,
Painters,
} of Dublin.

The sum of the evidence may be stated as follows:—

1. In all the trades, except the Dublin shipbuilding trade, the market was greatly overstocked with unskilled labour.

2. This overstock in the cotton spinning trade was to be attributed to the necessary custom for each spinner to have the assistance of several boys, who thus in course of time themselves become spinners: but in the printing and building trades it was occasioned by the artificial multiplication of apprentices and importation of country workmen made with a view to cheapen labour.

3. Some restriction upon the number of apprentices was requisite: but the rules of the Union made for this purpose were vexatious: these rules were in the printing trade strictly enforced against all employers, in the building trades against irregular employers only.

4. The trade of cotton spinners and printers was expanding, of Dublin builders decreasing, of Dublin shipbuilders almost extinct.

5. Generally, wages were tending to fall, owing to the competition of masters to undersell each other, and the oversupply of labour.

6. The union-rules which were found most inconvenient to masters and most frequently led to strikes were as follows.

a. Prohibitions to unionists to work with non-unionists.
b. Prohibitions against piecework.
c. The establishment of a uniform wage.
d. Restrictions upon the number of apprentices.

7. In all the trades, strikes against individual masters were frequent. In the cotton spinning trade there had been two general strikes against a reduction of wages consequent upon the introduction of enlarged machinery, one at Manchester in 1829, the other at Glasgow in 1837: in the printing and building trades there had been no general strike since the change of the Irish currency in 1826.

8. The effect of the repeal of the combination laws upon the conduct of strikes had been in general beneficial. In the printing trade there was a little violence: amongst cotton spinners some violence, but not much, and that arising chiefly out of collision with the men imported to succeed those on strike,—this collision being partly unavoidable from the large number of operatives displaced at the same time, partly engendered by the custom of the Union to "picket" the mills with "guards." But in the Dublin Canal trade there existed a complete system of intimidation and oppression by the Union: and in the Dublin building trades outrages were still of constant occur-

rence against that section of masters who are termed irregular employers.

9. A fortnight's notice on either side, previous to a change in the rate of wages, would be a preventive of strikes.

10. As a class, unionists were pronounced by the majority of masters to be more highly skilled operatives, and more respectable men than others in the trade.

11. The effect of combination upon wages was variously represented by the masters. In the opinion of all masters (with one exception) in the spinning and printing trades, combination has no effect upon wages; in the opinion of all masters in the building trade it keeps them up, but whether to a fair or unfair height is a disputed point. Amongst ship builders, combination, by limiting apprentices and requiring a uniform wage, was said to have raised wages to such an extent as to ruin trade. Unionists, as a rule, were in the receipt of higher wages than non-unionists. And the wages of cotton-spinners in Glasgow and Manchester, where combinations existed, were higher than the wages of the same trade in Belfast, where there was no combination.

[N.B.—Henceforth throughout this paper, for the sake of perspicuity, present tense is made to refer to the date of the Reports, the year 1888.]

COTTON-SPINNERS.

THE two general strikes of the Cotton-Spinners, the one at Manchester, in the year 1829, the other at Glasgow, in 1837, arose from the same cause, the introduction of large machinery, and the consequent alteration of the scale of wages.

A spinning machine is worked by one man; his chief labour consists in returning along the iron rails to the steam-engine the mule carriage which contains the spindles: he has also other mechanical operations to perform, and carefully to mend any of the very numerous threads that may be broken in the process; he is assisted by piecers, little children, between the age of nine and thirteen, who pass under the machine and cleanse it from the dust, which rapidly accumulates and spoils the twist. He is paid by the piece, so much per lb. of twist produced, and formerly the wages for each lb. of twist were uniform, irrespective of the size of the machine by which it was produced. At that time this arrangement was fair enough; machines did not vary very much in size, or at all events the number of spindles on a machine was rarely much in excess of three hundred. But it was soon found that a single spinner could manage a machine containing many more spindles, if only he was supplied with more piecers in proportion, and an additional pair of wheels for the mule carriage. In either case the number of spindles determines the amount of twist produced; six hundred spindles on one machine will produce twist of nearly as good a quality, and within seven per cent. of the same amount that six hundred spindles on two machines will produce. It also determines the amount of labour to the spinner; for a spinner managing a machine with six hundred spindles,

as compared with one managing a machine with three hundred spindles, has nearly twice the weight to move, and twice the care to bestow. Still a spinner *can* work a machine of six hundred spindles, and for a time at least one of one thousand spindles. This uniform rate of wages, it is clear, prevented the masters who had this enlarged machinery from making any advantage by it; two masters might manufacture the same amount of twist in a day; the one who had a large machine would employ but one man, the other who had two small machines would employ two; yet as each paid by the pound of twist, they would both pay the same wages. Still for a period the owners of the small machines maintained this system of uniform payment; but at last the time came, to Manchester in 1829, to Glasgow in 1837, when the proprietors of the heavy machines insisted that a reduction should be made upon the wages, in proportion to the increase of the number of spindles. The proprietors of the smaller machines had indeed not much object in resistance, for two smaller machines can be converted into one large one by simply coupling their wheels together; a process by which the spinner finds himself, as one deponent describes, in the position of a horse who has at the same time to draw two carts yoked to one another. In both Manchester and Glasgow, the principle of the change proposed by the masters was, that a standard price should be fixed for work done by a machine of a standard size, and that from all wages earned upon larger machines there should be deducted a percentage, progressively increasing with the number of spindles. Thus at Manchester, the standard size was fixed to be a mule carriage containing three hundred and thirty-six spindles; at Glasgow, one containing three hundred spindles; the deduction was to be, at Manchester 1½ per cent., at Glasgow 1 per cent., for every twelve spindles, which the machine had exceeding the standard number.

This change was very obnoxious to the men for several reasons. In the first place it led to extensive dismissal. For every 300 spindles added to a machine, by the method of yoking the wheels, a man was dismissed,—a hardship, not only to the men thus dismissed, but to others; for it threw more hands into the labour market, already overstocked, and thereby tended to bring about a further reduction of wages. In the next place, the heavier machines had always been disliked, for, as has been stated, the labour and anxiety of the spinner increase in proportion to the number of spindles. And this evil the men saw would, under the new system of wages, become at once universal and intensified. Universal, because every employer would make a point of having large, and not small, machines, that he might have the benefit of the deduction from the wages. Intensified, because every employer would have his machines not only large, but as large as possible, since the deduction rose in exact proportion to the increase of the number of spindles. The tendency would be to have all the machines carry 1000 spindles.

What exertion is required to work such a machine, may be estimated from facts put in evidence. Constructed upon the lightest

principle, a mule carriage for spinning fine numbers and carrying 816 spindles, weighs with all apparatus 15½ cwt., a mail coach weighing only about 18 cwt. A mule carriage for spinning coarse numbers and carrying 336 spindles is of a heavier construction, and weighs 14 cwt. The spinner has two such machines to attend to and manage alternately. Each machine runs on eight wheels over a railway six feet long to the steam-engine, and has to be returned by the spinner this distance to the steam-engine 2,500 times in the twelve hours; and the force required to be exerted every time by the spinner so returning it, is 160 lbs. or ⅔ths of the ordinary power of a horse. The operatives depose that no one can work these large machines continuously without requiring one or two days' rest in the week; that in one mill, where these machines were adopted, the increase of sickness amongst the men became very apparent; and it is in great measure to the undue labour entailed by heavy machines that they attribute the excess of mortality in the manufacturing towns (calculated by one table drawn up in 1832 to be 50 per cent.) over the mortality in agricultural districts. This danger of overwork was necessarily a very serious consideration, on account of the long hours observed in the manufacturing districts,—a day's work being considered twelve clear hours of labour, except on Saturday.

But the chief cause of complaint was the amount of the percentage deduction. The deduction from the gross wages would range, in Glasgow, as the number of spindles varied from 300 to 1000, from 1 to 58 per cent.; in Manchester, as the number of spindles varied from 336 to 1000, from 1 to 83 per cent. The practical effect was, that the net sum realized by a spinner, working 600 or 1000 spindles, exceeded but by very little the net sum realized by a spinner working 300 spindles with half or one-third of the labour. In other words, the labour of the spinner was tremendously increased, with nothing like an equivalent in the increase of the pay. And nothing would prevent this system pushing itself still further and further, until the largest machine should be introduced, which a single spinner could work continuously for two or three days together, or even for one day only.

It was against the introduction of this system, entailing such momentous consequences to the whole trade, that the general strikes took place at Manchester and Glasgow. The Manchester masters proposed it in 1829: the Glasgow masters followed their example in 1837. In both cases the strikes were long and desperately contested; in Manchester for six months, in Glasgow for four. In both, they were completely unsuccessful for the men. The effect of these strikes seems to have been different upon the masters and the men. The Glasgow masters are all of opinion that the unions are injurious to the operative, though they attribute to them different evils. One supposes that by conducting unsuccessful strikes, they depress wages; the other, that, by opposing masters, they keep up wages, but that the gain thus acquired is more than lost, by the contributions to the Union, and by the habits of intemperance pro-

duced by the Society. But, as regards the operatives, these two disastrous failures do not appear to have shaken their faith in their Union. Their experience leads them to think that partial strikes against individual masters will still be successful, and that even general strikes, though they completely miss their immediate object, are not pure losses to the men, inasmuch as the fear of their recurrence tends to prevent, though it can never altogether prevent, future attempts at unfair reduction in wages. "Without a Union," one witness says, "our wages would be reduced to nothing." But the operatives drew one inference from these two general strikes—viz.: that no Operatives' Union of a single trade can succeed against a combined Association of Masters. And the result of this belief was, that after the strike of 1829 various efforts were made to form a Union of wider extent than the men of a single trade in a single locality. A "National Association for the Protection of Labour" was started, intended to be a union of all trades and with the professed object to prevent reductions, but in no case to procure advances of wages, and its claims were circulated by a paper called "The Voice of the People." There was organized also a combination of all spinners in England, Scotland and Ireland, over 100,000 in number, and a meeting was held in the Isle of Man; but these societies seem to have been quite ephemeral.

Strikes of cotton-spinners in one respect are more serious than strikes of men in other trades. Upon every spinner there are directly dependent about seven other workmen, piecers, card-hands, &c. If he strikes, they too are thrown out of employment, until he returns.

The evidence shows that the labour market of the cotton-spinners, both in Manchester and Glasgow, was greatly over supplied, so much so, that no increase of demand for cotton had any perceptible effect on the rate of wages; and further, that this excess of supply had a tendency to increase itself. The causes of this seem to be twofold: first, the enlargement of the small machines into the larger ones, which involved the dismissal of one workman to every 300 additional spindles; secondly, the nature of the trade which breeds up more persons to the business than can be supported by it. Each spinner requires three piecers, who must be little children between the ages of nine and fourteen; these therefore must be changed every four years; and when they leave him, they naturally take to the spinning trade, of which they have already acquired some experience. And for a spinner working 600 or 1000 spindles, double or treble the number of piecers would be required.

As to other matters the evidence also went to show, that the Factory Act is not carried out; that children under thirteen are universally made to work twelve hours per diem, instead of eight, the legitimate time; and that this can hardly be otherwise, for it is impossible to procure relays of children to act as piecers to the spinners, who work twelve hours per diem, and that sometimes, so great is the pressure, children under nine years of age are put to work by their own parents.

The operatives further stated that the hours of work for adults—69 per week—were already too many, and that, now that the heavy machines are becoming common, there is greater necessity than ever for a curtailment of them; and that the object of every Union is to procure a passing of a ten hours' bill.

MANCHESTER COTTON-SPINNERS.

[Witnesses:—A Stipendiary Magistrate of Manchester, appointed in 1825; three Operatives, two of them being Secretaries to the Union.]

THE Cotton-Spinners' Union comprises about 1,060 out of the 1,500 spinners in Manchester; its constitution consists of wardens, council-men, and presidents; each shop elects one warden for every twenty-five members belonging to it; every five wardens elect one of their number to be a Council-man; the Council-men elect their own President. The Councilmen are each paid about 6*d.* or 8*d.* every night there is a meeting; there is also an Acting Secretary receiving 25*s.* per week. The subscription to the Society is 7*d.* weekly. The benefits are the following:—If a member of six months' standing gets discharged for anything not occasioned by his own misconduct, he is entitled to one-half of the monies that he has paid to the Society; there is a funeral allowance of £5; and a sum of £6 or £7 is distributed weekly amongst the unemployed, to keep them from starvation.

Between 1824 and 1829 there were ten or twelve partial strikes against individual masters, for the most part not very successful.

In March, 1829, began the general strike of the fine-spinners, which continued for six months, and ended in the submission of the men to the masters' demands. The cause of the strike was that the masters proposed a new list, whereby no longer a uniform price was paid in all cases without deduction, but a price per lb. having been fixed for all twist manufactured by machines containing 336 spindles, a deduction was made at the rate of 1½ per cent. for every twelve spindles beyond 336. This, in the extreme case (to which there is an obvious tendency) of a machine containing in all 1000 spindles, that is 664 extra spindles, would amount to 83 per cent. deduction on gross wages. Practically the wage would be reduced from a range of 28*s.* to 50*s.*, to a range of 24*s.* to 40*s.*, or to an average of 30*s.* per week. At least this was the masters' representation. An operative estimated the change to be a reduction upon the former scale of wages of 30 per cent. This list the masters justified in an address, issued by them to the public, on the score of necessity; trade could not, they said, be continued in Manchester on any other method; cotton-yarn had fallen in value; the current rates of labour were 15 to 40 per cent. lower in the neighbouring districts than in Manchester; and, whilst the price of other labour had diminished, spinners' wages had been stationary for thirteen years.

On the list being issued, according to the representation of the secretary of the Union during the time of the strike, the men

appointed a deputation to see the masters, to induce them, if possible, either to give up the proposed reduction, or to give time to the men to ascertain whether it was practicable to get the other masters in the surrounding districts to pay Manchester prices, and the deputation was authorized, in case these other masters refused, to consent to the proposed reduction. The masters, however, declined to allow any time for such inquiries, and, as is proved in the case of one master who was willing to compromise the matter with his men, compelled all the members of the Masters' Association at once to adopt, without deviation, the proposed list, by threats of enforcing a penalty bond of £500 against any refractory member, and of underselling him in the market. The leaders of the Union thought a strike unadvisable, and, with a view to convince the men of this, proposed that every man who was likely to be called into the strike should send in a written statement of the number of weeks he could do without pay, and the name of the piece of furniture in his house he would consent to sell, and its probable value. Contrary to the expectation of the leaders, the returns showed an amount of £300 which the men were ready to contribute, besides the loss of their wages, and confirmed the men in their intention to strike. The strike accordingly took place of all the fine spinners in Manchester.

From March to September, a period of twenty-three weeks, the fine spinners were supported by their own Union funds, contributed chiefly by the coarse spinners, who were still employed, and whom the change did not effect; but on the 2nd of September seventeen masters, spinners of coarse yarns, gave notice to their men that from the 12th inst. they must undergo a reduction of 5 per cent., unless they would sign a document by which they pledged themselves in no way to support the spinners who were turned out, and, in case of their being discovered to do so, agree to forfeit a fortnight's wages to their masters. Rather than sign this document the coarse spinners struck; so all the spinners were now idle. But the greatest distress prevailed; the weekly allowance distributed did not exceed 2*s.* 3*d.* per week to each man, though he might have a wife and family. About the 20th of September the Union applied to the churchwardens, sending them a resolution, whereby the men expressed themselves willing to make a concession of about one-half of the masters' demands, and begged the churchwardens to interfere, and bring about a meeting of an equal number of masters and men, to settle the question. The churchwardens declined.

The leaders of the Union were now most anxious that the strike should terminate, even though it entailed a complete concession on the part of the men; they called a meeting, but the decision arrived at was that the strike should last for six months longer. The leaders, however, not yet baffled, then proposed that there should be another voting, and that by ballot, and without any preliminary speeches. The ballot accordingly was taken, and the result was out of 700 votes a majority of three in favour of continuing the strike; but the leading members, so great was their anxiety for a close of

the contest, announced that there was a minority of seven. By this device the strike was closed, after a duration of six months, and the men then returned to work upon the masters' terms.

On behalf of the Union generally, the men state that in Manchester labour is free; that there is no law prohibiting unionists from working with non-unionists; and that there has been no strike for an advance of wages, but only against reductions, and those are alleged to be undue reductions. They also give evidence to the following effect.

(1.) That the Union is reluctant to enter into strikes. The understood practice of the Society is that no strike is supported which has not previously received the sanction of the committee. The grievance must first be laid before the committee by those suffering from it; a deputation is then appointed to sift into the matter, and afterwards to reason with the master. It is not till after his refusal to give redress that the strike is allowed. It often happens, says the witness, that the deputation finds that the men have misrepresented the master, and then they receive not aid, but a reprimand. One instance, out of ten or twelve which could have been given, is this. There was a shop in Manchester, in which all the men had been in the habit of turning out one day without the knowledge of the committee, and the next day, having made matters agreeable with the master, of going back to work. At last the master refused to take any of them back, and then they applied to the committee for support. The committee at once sent a deputation to the master, and informed him that the strikes had been without their sanction, and that the men would receive no support from the Society. After some conversation with the deputation, the master agreed to receive the men back into his service, upon condition that in future there should be no strike without first sending to him a deputation from the committee. The men returned to work, and after that made no strike of the same kind. The leaders are not eager to bring the men into a strike, as is shown by their devices to prevent the strike of 1829, and also to bring it to a close in the manner above mentioned; nor have they any pecuniary object in conducting a strike.

(2.) That when a strike has been commenced the Union is ready to submit the matter to an amicable settlement. In the strike of 1829 the Union, as above mentioned, applied to the churchwardens to bring about a joint committee of masters and men, to arrange the wages, and expressed themselves willing to accept a large reduction. In a dispute in 1831 the men accepted a reduction of about 7*s.* per week on the average, in order not to prolong the strike.

(3.) That the Union discountenances any violence on the part of those on strike. At a general meeting of the Society, held in December, 1836, it was unanimously agreed: that "Any person or persons molesting any of Mr. Faulkner's knobsticks shall not be countenanced by the Society, considering that if we gain the just rights of our labour we must preserve the peace." The secretary of

the Union states that between 1825 and 1838 only twenty or twenty-two charges had been brought before the magistrates against the operatives in the Union; and that only one of these persons had been convicted; and this act of violence had arisen in a dispute at a public-house. It is also averred that, during the strike of 1829, not one master had been molested, not one farthing's worth of property had been destroyed, and not one breach of the peace committed, with the single exception above mentioned. Mr. Foster, the stipendiary magistrate, on the other hand, deposes (without, however, specifying any cases), that in or about 1829 there were several cases of partial violence arising out of obstructions thrown in the way of new hands going to their work in the place of those who had turned out, and that some persons were summarily convicted; that there were some, but very few, deliberate assaults; and that the picketing of mills in times of strike operated as a very effectual intimidation in most instances, and placed the master under the greatest possible difficulty in supplying himself with hands. Mr. Foster, however, adds, that the cotton spinners are, like the manufacturing population in general, a very well-conducted class in respect to any tendency to riot or breaches of the peace.

The operatives furnished instances of masters refusing to employ unionists, dismissing unionists, throwing upon the spinner the fines for breaches of the Factory Act, and instigating unionists to strike against other masters by whom they were being undersold.

GLASGOW COTTON-SPINNERS.

[Witnesses:—Three Master Spinners; Three Operative Spinners; the Sheriff of Lanarkshire; the Legal Agent of the Operatives' Union.]

THE Glasgow master cotton-spinners have a combination of a somewhat mysterious character; they have no written rules, no fixed times or places of meeting, no regular subscriptions or expenses, except a charge on each master at so much for every thousand spindles worked in his factory, for the support of a secretary. Practically they form a very strong body.

The operatives' Union numbers about 750 out of the 1000 spinners in Glasgow; its principal rules are in substance as follows:—

Art. 1. This Association to be termed the Association of Operative Cotton Spinners in Glasgow, and to have for its only object the supporting of prices, and enabling its members to obtain a fair remuneration for their labour.

Art. 2. The affairs of the Association to be conducted by the delegates, and a committee of twelve.

Art. 3. Each shop to contribute one delegate.

Art. 9. The committee to observe that the funds of the Association do not at any time fall below £1000; and the committee with the delegates to have power to vary the fortnightly instalments from 9*d.* to 2*s.*, according as the current fortnightly expenditure which ranges from £10 to £70. No instalment to be levied above 2*s.*, without a vote of the Association.

Art. 16. Any person may be admitted a member of this Association who has served a regular time as a piecer in the Glasgow district, and is in possession of a pair of wheels, and has received the approbation of the trade, upon payment of £1 3*s*.

Art. 12. Members to submit to the majority; that majority, in cases of strikes or alterations of articles, to be two-thirds of the votes returned.

Art. 13. No shop, or individual or individuals in a shop, considering himself or themselves aggrieved, shall have liberty to strike work upon any pretence whatever without giving an intimation at a delegate meeting in due form. The case shall then be fully considered, and, in all cases relating to strikes or threatened reduction, a general vote be taken; and if the proposition be carried, the men shall cease to work. Any member on strike is at liberty to take wheels, wherever he can find them, at the standard price.

Art. 17. Any member losing his employment, and not more than 3*s*. in debt, shall be entitled to the benefit of the "clear idle" men for the period of thirty-four weeks from the date of his being enrolled on their books, which must be at least two weeks after leaving work.

Art. 14. No individual shall be allowed to take wheels in any shop where any allowable strike or dispute between the men and their masters is existing, and until the said strike or dispute is considered settled by the Association, and by an order from the committee to that effect. Any member acting otherwise shall be expelled the Association.

Art. 15. This Association binds and obliges every one of its members to refrain from instructing any individual in the art of spinning, except such as are sons or brothers of a spinner, who may have been or is at present a member of this Association; and it must be remembered that such persons can only be admissible by having served them as piecers; and in order that individuals, having admissible piecers, may not take advantage of their neighbour, they are strictly prohibited from allowing such piecers to spin in their absence, and they must follow their draws, and overlook them in all their instructions and practice.

Art. 19. Funeral money to be £4.

Art. 21. The committee to take a room not connected with a public-house, to accommodate both themselves and the idle men.

Art. 24. General expenses:—

Each committee man, £2 per quarter.
The clerk, 15*s*. per week.
President of the meeting, 1*s*. per night.
Directors, 6*d*. per night.
Delegates, 6*d*. per night.
Aliment to each man on strike, 12*s*. per week.
No. 60, per week, £6.*

* To what class No. 60 refers, does not appear.

It will be observed that some rules, usual with Trade Associations, are not found here; there is nothing to prevent unionists working with non-unionists, or to enforce the payment of the same price for the same work done; nothing to prevent the employment of women, &c.

During the existence of the Combination Laws, the meetings of the operatives were private, and an oath was required upon admission; upon their abolition the custom was discontinued, but the proceedings for some two years—viz., from 1825 to 1827—remained more or less private, because, according to the representations of an operative (which, however, are repudiated by masters), distinguished members of the Union were subjected to systematic persecution. Publicity was finally established, when the masters or their Association recognised the existence of the operatives' Union. In 1826, a general reduction, amounting to twenty-two or twenty-three per cent., was made in wages, and accepted unresistingly by the men. For the next ten years no change in wages was effected; once a reduction was proposed, but the Union, finding that it was not sanctioned by the majority of masters, gave notice of resistance, and no reduction took place. These ten years, however, were not free from partial strikes, which arose for the redress of some particular grievances not connected with wages, as the employment of an unpopular foreman, of obnoxious men, &c.; or were directed against individual masters, who were endeavouring to lower wages. The latter description of strikes, the operatives depose, was instigated by masters paying standard wages, and who threatened to reduce them, if they were undersold by masters paying less than standard wages. The masters examined contradict this statement, and disown all connexion with men on strike. The truth seems to be that the instigation was real, though of an indirect character, and that masters, if they have no fear for themselves, do not object to see a strike against their neighbours. The result of these partial strikes between 1826 and 1836 was a tolerable equalization of wages in the different mills.

In the autumn of 1836 the operatives applied for a rise of wages. The application was not made, according to their own account, until they had justified it to themselves by ascertaining the then prices of yarns, cotton, and cotton wool, as compared with those of former years. Also, three days' notice was given to the masters for deliberation, for the application was made on the Tuesday, and the reduction was to begin on the Friday. The masters who, it is said, had hindered the investigation by the men into the prices, told them they thought the application was unfounded, since wages were lower in Lancashire, and a rise of Glasgow wages would infallibly introduce self-acting machinery. Nevertheless, they granted the advance asked for of sixteen per cent. This advance does not seem to have extended itself to the country district round Glasgow, and shortly afterwards, in October, 1836, the Glasgow unionists were, as they say, compelled by the threats of their own masters into a strike against

a wealthy country manufacturer in the neighbourhood, who had refused to give the advance. The strike lasted sixteen weeks, closing in February, 1837; it was quite unsuccessful, and cost the Union upwards of £3000; in fact, stripped it of all its reserve fund.

Meantime, trade was falling rapidly in Glasgow, and in April, 1837, it had fallen in some branches of the cotton trade to the extent, it is represented, of from thirty or forty per cent.; and the masters resolved—whether by formal agreement or not—to withdraw the advance of sixteen per cent. made the previous autumn. The notification of this to the men is thus described by one of the operatives. On Wednesday, April 3rd, intimation was given by a few masters of a reduction to take place on Monday, the 8th; the 4th was a fast-day. On Friday, the 5th, a further number of the masters gave similar intimation; on the same evening there was a meeting of the Union, and a resolution passed that, as only a minority of masters had as yet proposed the reduction, it should be resisted. On Saturday, the 6th, the remainder of the masters hearing of this meeting, likewise gave notice of reduction, the reduction in all cases to begin from the following Monday. An operative goes on to say that the men applied to the masters to give them information as to the state of the market, or to allow them time to procure it for themselves, but that both requests were refused. "We then had no resource but just to strike upon the moment, and all the men in and round Glasgow, at least the greater part of them, left their work on Monday. . . . . If the whole of the masters had given us a week's notice, I am bound, in the name of every cotton-spinner, to say there would have been no strike." Within a fortnight or three weeks, the operatives, finding their own Union to be without funds, and trade generally to be seriously depressed, offered to the Masters' Association to return to work upon the reduced wages—*i. e.*, upon the wages as they were before the advance of sixteen per cent. The masters, however, now declined to take the men back except upon their own terms; the men held out for thirteen weeks longer, and then submitted unconditionally.

These terms have now to be considered: as compared with the advanced wages of 1836, they were a reduction, according to an operative, of 57 or 58 per cent., but according to an employer, of 59 per cent. upon one-half of the operatives, and of 43 on the other half; according to another employer, the reduction never exceeded 50 per cent., and according to a third, who spoke only as to his own manufactory, 25 per cent. These reductions were effected in the following way; first of all, the advance of 16 per cent., made in the autumn of 1836, was withdrawn from all spinners. Secondly, as to those spinners who used shuttle-cops (about half of the aggregate number), a further reduction of 13 per cent. was made. And lastly, the new principle of payment was to be introduced, whereby a price was fixed for work done on mules containing three hundred spindles, and from wages done for all work on larger mules a deduction was to be made at the rate of 1 per cent. for every twelve spindles above

three hundred. By this third means alone the aggregate deduction, effected upon the gross wages, would range from 1 to 58 per cent., as the number of spindles rose from three hundred to one thousand; practically however, the average deduction, according to a master's representation, was about 30 per cent.

The wages, even thus reduced in these three ways, were nevertheless stated by a Glasgow master of large experience to amount to from 20*s.* to 40*s.* per week, and therefore to be higher than the Lancashire wages, which were said to range only from 20*s.* to 26*s.* or 27*s.*; this however is contradicted by an operative, who divides Glasgow spinners into three classes; the first make 35*s.* per week, but these form not more than one-eighth of the operatives, and have to work more hardly than is right; the second class make 24*s.* or 25*s.* a week; the third, lower sums, as low as 16*s.* or even 12*s.* a week; and the average wages are 21*s.* or 22*s.* The amount of labour performed for these wages is, exclusive of meals, twelve hours on five days in the week and nine on Saturday, in all sixty-nine hours per week.

As to other terms of the employment of spinners,—notice is not required for the master to dismiss, or for the man to leave; each master makes a point of paying the same rate of wages to all those in his factory, engaged in the same work, although they may possess various degrees of skill; formerly the master could, if the work was faulty, inflict fines at his discretion, but this practice was discontinued at the instance of the workmen, who; under the guidance of the Union, requested that the punishment for bad work should no longer be fines, but instant dismissal; women are employed in some mills exclusively, they cannot well earn more than 20*s.*

The piecers are obliged to work the same number of hours as the spinners, because the machine cannot be kept going without them; they are divided into three classes, according to their ages, and the wages they earn; some, being from thirteen to fourteen years of age, make 6*s.* 3*d.* per week; others, being between eleven and thirteen, 4*s.* 6*d.*; others again, being between nine and twelve years old, only 2*s.* 6*d.*

The loss of this strike to spinners and piecers, exclusively of the expense of the funds by the Union, was estimated by a master at £1,500 per week for sixteen weeks, in all £24,000. Mr. Sheriff Alison puts it at £29,000 odd; he also adds £40,000 more for losses entailed on other operatives dependent on the spinners, such as card and picking room hands, porters, colliers, &c., who were thrown out of work; £33,000 for loss of capital to owners of cotton mills; £24,000 to importers of cotton, &c.; £34,000 to tradesmen dealing with operatives, making together a total of £161,380.

During the sixteen weeks of the strike, Glasgow was in considerable commotion from so large a number of idle and dissatisfied operative spinners being thrown loose on society; this was increased by a simultaneous strike of several other trades The Union placed guards at the various cotton-mills, professedly, to ascertain whether any of their own men on aliment went to work, and also how many

hands were still employed, with a view to their own proceedings as to continuing or discontinuing the strike, but in great measure doubtless, to hinder, by any means short of violence, new or old hands taking employment. One employer took the precaution of prohibiting all his hands then at work from leaving the premises during the strike, upon any pretence whatever, even to see their families, and this saved all trouble; but elsewhere disputes and riots naturally ensued, and at last the guards were removed by the Union, upon warning that they would be taken into custody. Still their acts of intimidation did not generally proceed to open serious assaults. Towards the end of the strike however it was otherwise; one man was murdered as he left the premises, a woman had vitriol thrown upon her, and there were two attempts at incendiarism. The authors of these crimes were unknown; but the sheriff arrested the Committee of the Union upon the charge of having instigated them, and of having appointed a secret committee, the object of which was assassination of the masters. Upon trial the verdict of the jury was "not proven." On the other hand the men and especially their legal agent declared that, from the first, the unionists had been misunderstood by the sheriff, and unfairly treated by him; that the Union, as a society, discountenanced all acts of violence, and disclaimed any connexion with the specific acts charged to them; that the disturbances which had taken place had been absurdly exaggerated, and were to be attributed not so much to the interference of the unionists, as to the provocation of the imported hands or "nobs"—a low class who wandered about the country living on the strikes of others, by getting employment, in spite of their worthlessness as workmen, from the masters in emergency, or by being bought out by the unionists,—lastly that no secret committee had been appointed, much less charged with wicked and illegal acts.

In support of this defence they appealed to the break down of the case at the trial, and also to the conduct of their officers committed, who had made no attempt at concealment of the truth, or at escape, though they had ample warning of the intention to arrest them, and had at the time solemnly averred their innocence to their confidential legal adviser.

This statement of the men is in some respects borne out by the masters. One adverse employer expresses his belief that the strike was kept on foot not so much by intimidation, as by a sense of honour amongst the operatives not to desert a society to which they had pledged themselves; that the unionists would have taken no active steps toward outrage had the "nobs" been kept out of their way; and that they were in general steady and good workmen, and a better class than the "nobs;" and all the masters agree that directly after the end of the strike, which closed so disastrously to the operatives, irritation was at once laid aside.

Some light is also thrown upon the proceedings of the Union by an official paper found upon their premises, and impounded by the sheriff; its date was May, 1836, that is, a year before the strike, a proof that it was never intended for the public eye. Its chief con-

tents were a plan to distribute, by ballot, some funds for the purpose of aiding emigration; it also set forth some instructions, which, though rendered mysterious by the employment of a figure (No. 60) to denote, it is presumed, some particular class of unionist, and thereby lending some shadow of ground for the supposition that a secret committee might have been established in the time of the strike, sufficiently indicate the views of the Union respecting illegal acts of violence. The instructions, so far as material, are as follows:—

"We propose that those called illegal men, nobs excepted, presently occupying wheels in Glasgow, should be offered a union on the same terms as those proposed to the west country spinners, viz. by paying £5 as entry money. That these illegal men pay 5*s.* per fortnight, along with the regular instalment of the trade. They shall grant a bill of security for value received. The £5 of entry money, and the current instalment from the time that they occupied wheels in the Glasgow body, must all be paid up before they can be admitted as legal members. If any illegal men now occupying wheels should be refractory, and not agree to those reasonable terms of union, No. 60 shall receive £5 for each of them they unshop; also £5 for every stranger whom they shall keep from occupying wheels. As this body has always kept the laws of their country, wishing rather to protect their union by moral force and public opinion, than to have recourse to measures of an opposite nature, let it be distinctly understood and duly inculcated on every member, that if No. 60 or idle men commit themselves in point of any violation of the laws of their country, they must [themselves alone be responsible. No member of the trade shall have power to bring in a petition, either directly or indirectly, to solicit money on behalf of any such men, who may thus wantonly commit themselves in violation of our express laws."

One effect of this strike may be added. Immediately on its breaking out one master set to work to repair his self-acting mules; when they were ready, he offered to take back his former hands to manage them at the reduced price; they declined, and nobs were then employed.

THE BELFAST COTTON-SPINNERS.

[Evidence of a master spinner.]

In 1825 there seems to have been a severe strike: the Union was extinguished, and has not revived. Labour in Belfast is, as the master expressed it, perfectly free. The larger machines have only just begun to be introduced. There had been a slight reduction in wages in 1837, contemporaneously with the reduction in Glasgow, and the men had submitted to it, and rejected the request made to them by a Glasgow deputation to refuse it.

The hours of labour are the same in Belfast as in Glasgow and Manchester, viz., sixty-nine actual working hours per week; but

wages, whether or not owing to the absence of an operatives' union, are considerably lower. A good workman's wages in Belfast are estimated by the employer at 20*s.* or 22*s.*, the maximum being 25*s.* net; whereas a Glasgow employer puts Glasgow wages at from 20*s.* to 40*s.*; Manchester wages at 20*s.* to 26*s.* or 27*s.*

BELFAST CALICO PRINTERS.

[Witness:—A Master Calico Printer.]

THIS trade presents an instance of an employer finally closing his establishment in consequence of a strike. The step, however, cannot be wholly ascribed to the conduct of the unionists, for it appears that this was the only establishment in Belfast where calico printing had been attempted, so that, probably, before the strike, the experiment had not proved very successful to the master.

The dispute arose about apprentices. Apprentices are taken at the age of 15 or 16 years, and their term, therefore, does not expire till they are 22 or 23 years old. In some cases they receive a small weekly wage, increasing year by year; but generally they are put at once to piecework, at the same rate as journeymen, and after three or four years, it is found that they can earn within 5*s.* of full wages, which are reckoned at from 18*s.* to 25*s.* per week. The rules concerning apprentices are as follows:—1. That in each shop the apprentices shall not outnumber the journeymen. 2. That each apprentice shall be bound for seven years, and pay a premium of £5 to the men in the shop; and 3. As to work, that no apprentice shall ground after a journeyman, except in blue, that is, as explained by the master, an apprentice shall not do simple work, which is within his power, and which makes him remunerative to the master; but shall be trained in working blue, which is the most difficult colour, and which he cannot work with profit to his master, at all events till nearly the end of his apprenticeship.

On the occasion which led to the strike, the master was desirous to add to the number of his apprentices, and was content to keep within the prescribed number, but he objected to the payment of £5, partly because he feared he should not find boys whose parents could afford to pay so large a sum, partly because he did not desire to see any accession made in this manner to the funds of the Union. The men, however, declared for a strike, if the master persisted. Thereupon, the master retired from business. The men were thrown completely out of employ, and the trade no longer exists in Belfast.

Of the Union, no information is given on other points, except that it had a rule prohibiting the employment of women.

IRISH PRINTERS.

[Witnesses:—From Dublin—A Master Printer; A Proprietor of two Newspapers; Three Journeymen, two being secretaries, one to the General, the other to the Local Union. From Belfast—A Proprietor of two Newspapers. From Newry—A Newspaper Proprietor and Master Printer; A Journeyman Printer.]

THERE appear to be three Typographical societies, one in England,

a second in Scotland, and a third in Ireland. They are not connected with societies of any other trades. Each of the three has independent laws of its own, and is subdivided into local societies or branches. The principal branch of the Irish society is at Dublin; it was first established in the year 1825; at that time there was great distress in the printing trade, and those who were in work found it necessary to contribute to the relief of their fellows; but this was not enough; an appeal was accordingly made to the public, and out of the money thus raised, weekly allowances from 2*s.* to 7*s.* 6*d.* were distributed amongst the distressed men, about fifty in number, forming one-third of the whole body of printers then in Dublin.

To prevent a recurrence of this state of things, the Society was established. Its avowed object is the formation of a permanent fund for affording relief to those who may be out of employment, and from time to time, to settle the price of labour between the employers and the employed, and other matters affecting the general welfare of the printing community. It comprises about 260 of the 280 adult printers in Dublin. It is governed by a committee, assisted by delegates. The committee consists of a secretary, four compositors, and three pressmen. The secretary is alone paid, he receives £20 per annum. The condition of admission is, that an apprentice, at the close of his term, be proposed by a member, who produces his indentures; his name is then circulated by means of the Society round all the printing establishments in Dublin, to ascertain if he is a person of good character and qualified to be admitted. If the majority are in his favour, he pays £1 1*s.* fee, and becomes a member. Members of the Scotch society are admitted upon payment of 17*s.* 6*d.* Strangers must pay £2 2*s.* Members, on becoming masters (and of these there are ten in Dublin) cease to belong to the Society. The weekly subscription is 6*d.* The benefits are—Aliment to the unemployed, at the rate of 7*s.* 6*d.* for the first six weeks, and 5*s.* for the next seven; 5*s.* to tramps, upon production of their card; assistance to emigrants, viz.: £4 to emigrants to England; £8 to America. Funeral allowance on the death of a member, £3.

The amount of sums paid on these various accounts during the year 1834, and the three following years was as follows:—

	1834.			1835.			1836.			1837.		
	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
To unemployed claimants	226	17	1	195	2	2	190	12	9	113	13	7½
To Emigrants, about 120 in the four years	82	19	3	82	6	2	106	18	7	57	12	8
To Tramps.....	9	10	0	6	5	0	10	5	0	18	10	0
For burial	6	0	0	15	0	0	21	0	0	21	0	0
	325	6	4	298	16	4	328	16	4	208	15	10½
Total...	£1,261 14*s.* 10½*d.*											

The usual terms of employment of printers are, that a fortnight's notice shall be given by the master who desires to dismiss, or by the man who desires to leave. Payment is either by the week or by the piece. In general, to be paid by the week, is considered a privilege, and reserved only to the best and steadiest workmen, whom the master desires to retain in his employment; but an instance is given, where those who were paid by the week neglected their work in order to induce the master to pay by the piece, which they thought to be the most profitable manner. The present rate of weekly wages is, to printers engaged in the book-printing department, or on an evening newspaper, 30*s.*, and to those on a morning paper, which requires nightwork, 32*s.* 6*d.*, and in one case, 36*s.* The rate for piecework is 8*d.* for every 1000 types. The wages in a provincial town, as at Newry, are lower, the weekly rate being 25*s.*

These wages were drawn up in a book by the men, and submitted to the masters.—The masters are agreed that on the whole they are reasonable enough, not too high for a good workman.—They are lower than the wages given in Dublin before the war, which for a morning paper were once as high as £2: but they are higher than what they were a few years ago. As compared with London wages, they are lower, the price for printing a London morning paper being as much as £2 8*s.* per week; and this difference cannot be wholly accounted for by the difference of price of food, which according to a table made in 1825 is not more than 25 per cent. in favour of Dublin. But as compared with Glasgow they are high. Glasgow wages are for the week 20*s.* to 25*s.*, and for piecework only 5½*d.* instead of 8*d.* for every 1000 types.

Printers work ten hours during the day, formerly they used to work eleven, but, so desirous were they for a change, that in one instance they refused an offer of an additional 2*s.* 6*d.* per week for an additional eleventh hour daily.

There have been no general strikes in the Printing Trade, but numerous ones against individual masters. The principal causes of disputes between masters and their men on account of the Union are three in number. They are 1st. The restriction of the number of apprentices. 2nd. The imposition of a minimum or uniform rate of wages. 3rd. The refusal of the unionists, or "body-men," as they term themselves, to work with non-unionists.

1st. As to apprentices.

Formerly there was no restriction as to the number of apprentices, but since 1824, the number of apprentices has most disproportionately multiplied. Of this fact there is no doubt; both masters and men are agreed that it is a most serious and growing evil. In 1835 it is said that there were in Dublin 150 journeymen and 200 apprentices, and a table exhibits that at present there are in Ireland 454 journeymen and 547 apprentices; in the large towns the proportion of apprentices is smaller, in Dublin, for instance, they number only 160 to 280 journeymen, whereas in Drogheda there are but two journeymen to twelve apprentices. This increasing anomaly is attributed to several

causes: 1. there is severe competition amongst master printers, and to meet this a master uses the cheaper labour of apprentices instead of journeymen; a practice encouraged by Government who give out their printing by contract always to the lowest bidder. An instance is given of a post office contract, which was undertaken for a less sum than the amount of wages payable for the same if journeymen printers only were employed. 2. Parents living in the country are possessed with the idea that printing is an avenue to great advancement, and so are anxious to apprentice their sons to the trade. 3. Small printers speculating on casual work, or adventurers without capital or patronage, start newspapers, for economy engage apprentices without limitation, fail, and then turn their apprentices adrift. A list is given of twenty-five newspapers which since 1824 have thus started and failed.

The effect of this excessive supply of apprentices was that a great number of the journeymen who had been regularly educated were unemployed, and their places filled up by unskilled apprentices. At the present time one-half remain so unemployed.

The Union determined to remedy this evil, and in 1836 issued a circular, that "After the 15th of September, 1836, no office should employ a greater number of apprentices than in the proportion of one to two men permanently employed, two to four, three to six: and where more than six were employed, the number of apprentices should be increased to four, but on no account should that number be increased."

This restriction against apprentices at Dublin is much stricter than that observed at Glasgow.*

The Irish masters, however, did not make much objection to the rules, so far as the number of apprentices was directed to be in proportion to the number of journeymen: they all felt that it was high time, for the sake of the trade in general, that some restriction should be observed, if not imposed by rule, though there was a difference of opinion among them, as to what the proportion should be; a Dublin master thinking that one apprentice to three journeymen would be sufficient, whilst a provincial master held it necessary that there should be two apprentices to every three journeymen, probably because, from the country, promotion removes many more men than from the town. But what was reasonably obnoxious to the masters

* The rules agreed upon in the month of May, 1837, between the Committees of masters and journeymen of Glasgow were as follows;

1. Each book and jobbing office may have three apprentices at the outset if the master be a regular bred printer: and for every journeyman afterwards employed, another apprentice.

It is desirable however that the number of apprentices at each department bear as near a proportion to the journeymen at the same department as possible.

2. Every regularly bred printer in an office, in whatever department he be employed, to count as a journeyman: and no person to count as an apprentice, unless put to case or press.

3. When a journeyman with a view to permanent employment cannot be found after inquiry of the Secretary of the Glasgow Typographical Society and a reasonable delay, the master will resort to taking an apprentice.

4. When a journeyman has been dismissed from two offices for bad conduct he shall be considered an irregular man, and not within the meaning of article 3.

was the restriction at the end of the rule, whereby the maximum number of apprentices in any one establishment was, irrespective of the number of journeymen, fixed absolutely at four. This restriction, moreover, was enforced most rigorously. Two cases are given of masters entering upon large contracts at a low figure, upon the faith of an express promise, on the part of their men, to allow an extra apprentice, and the men then turning round and compelling the master to dismiss the apprentice. The men however dispute the existence of the promise. But one very strong case is put beyond a doubt. A master having four apprentices, bought a printing machine: none of his journeymen being able to work it, he took an apprentice, and began to train him on the condition that he was not to learn printers' work, *i.e.*, to be a compositor, or a pressman. The men were required by their Union to complain of the transgression of their rule: the master offered either to dismiss the boy in favour of any journeyman whom the men would provide, and who would be capable and ready to work the machine at full wages (30*s.*), or, in default, to refer to arbitration the question whether the employment of a boy for the machine was really a breach of the Union rule. The only answer made by the men was, that they thought it a very hard case upon the master, but that, if the boy was not removed, they were bound by their union to strike. And the master, being unable to resist, had to dismiss the boy.

It may be added that the terms on which apprentices are engaged vary in different places, and with different masters. In some cases a premium of £20 is required; in others again wages begin after the first six months. In general the boy is supported by his parents for the first two years; after that he receives wages, beginning at 5*s.* per week, and rising up to 10*s.* in the last year of his term.

2. As to the dictation by the Union of the rate of wages, in most trades this is the common cause of troubles. But with Irish printers there is rarely a dispute about wages. This arises from the character of both parties, who cheerfully bear testimony in favour of each other. The employers wish that the men should be in the first instance well educated, and then that they should be comfortable, and remain long in their service. The men are capable, industrious, and attached to their employers. Some disputes, however, must of course arise. There was a difficulty when the change in the currency took place, and some particular rules with respect to wages are justly complained of by the masters. The compositors insist upon being paid so much a page, as if it were all solid matter, though, as a fact, a great part of the space may be filled by a woodcut; newspaper printers also require to be paid afresh for matter which is daily inserted with little or no change, and the types of which are left standing. Some masters also are not satisfied that the wages are uniform to the best and worst alike; but one master distinctly states that he prefers a uniform scale, as it prevents all quarrels. And in general the masters allow that the scale of wages is not unreasonable, or too high for good workmen.

3. As to the refusal of "body-men" to work with non-unionists,—this is a rule nearly always found, where a union is strong enough to enforce it, that is, where it comprises the great majority of the trade. But it is a rule which, perhaps more than any other, works oppressively. It forces men to join the body from fear, lest otherwise they be left unemployed. It entirely strips the master of any control in his own shop. It operates with peculiar severity upon master newspaper printers, whose business is subject to emergencies, requiring all hands, whether unionist or non-unionist, to help to bring out the paper with punctuality.

The secretary of the printers' union makes the surprising statement that he is not aware that such a rule exists in the Union; and perhaps the rule may not be committed to paper. But the secretary could not be ignorant that as a practice it was most strenuously carried out. Two instances may be given. Mr. Hardy, a witness before the committee, had an ordinary book-printing establishment, where only unionists were employed, and also a printing machine, quite lately introduced into the trade. On this machine he printed the *Warder* newspaper. The types were set up at the *Warder* office by the printers there, who were non-unionists, and then carried over to Mr. Hardy's office for the impressions to be struck off by the machine. One day the boy carrying the types up the stairs of Mr. Hardy's office slipped, and put his knee through one of the formes. Mr. Hardy being under a penalty of £50 if there was any delay in the printing, asked his own workmen, who were in his employ by the week, to put the matter straight, as there was no time to be lost. They answered him in a friendly way, "expressed great sorrow, said if sitting up all night, or walking twenty miles to any place would oblige him, they would do it, but they would not touch those types." The other instance was a case where a proprietor of a newspaper, being fearful one morning of not bringing out his paper in time to catch the post to England, asked a man who was not a member of the Union, but who was a regular bred printer, and who at that time was in his employ as a reporter at 30*s*. a week, just to take the compositors' stick, and set up some matter. The men at once intimated that if this man did any work they would give notice.

Instances could be multiplied of the vexatious interference of the Union in other matters. One strike was against a master for dismissing a foreman, who was popular with them, but who could not give his employer more than two or three days a week. In time of strike the Unionists have over and over again bought up or frightened away independent printers imported from Scotland or England, and even apprentices from the masters to whom they were bound. The effects were most serious. One great master withdrew a large part of his capital, and abstained from other enterprises he had in hand. Proprietors of country newspapers, a class especially vulnerable to interference, feared lest their trade should become too precarious to be continued. Masters felt they were no longer masters in their own establishments. One deposes as follows :—

"I had resolved to put an end to this state of misery and slavery, or to lock up my establishment: accordingly I adopted rather a novel plan. I fitted up privately in the rear of my premises, a printing office unknown to my men, and known only to one or two confidential persons. I got a fount of types and put it into it. I went to the country free schools, I brought in children from them, I put them into his secret printing office, I slept them on the premises, I fed them upon the premises, and privately at night took them out to give them exercise and air, and sent them into the country on a Sunday, to take gymnastic exercises in my garden at my own cottage. I attended to the business in the printing office, and attended to the teaching of these boys myself: and by the time this strike came (the strike for the reporter using the compositor's stick) I had had these little boys taught, some not more than ten years of age, whom I perched upon stools, and thus set at defiance the threats of these mighty combinators."

This deponent, who is a newspaper proprietor at Belfast, managed by great exertions to make himself independent of the Union, but elsewhere its power remained undiminished.

The employers complain that the Union lays down the regulations for the trade without consulting them. This is much to be regretted; it does not however seem to be always the case; and the masters are in a measure themselves to blame for refusing to recognise the existence of the Union. In 1833, it appears that there was a circular sent round to the newspaper proprietors for the purpose of establishing some standard by agreement, and only one out of the many persons to whom the application was made condescended to answer.

With regard to strikes, one rule of the Union is that, should any member, after being cautioned on the subject, apply at any office considered unfair, or in which a dispute may exist, the Secretary of the Society, where it may take place, shall immediately communicate the circumstance to the Secretary of the Union, with the name of the individual so offending, that he may be dealt with accordingly. It may be added that acts of violence during strike, partly from the strength of the Union which can effectually crush any competition from non-unionists or imported hands, partly from the peaceable character of printers as a class, are of rare occurrence; still one master deposes that for some time he had to carry arms.

DUBLIN BUILDING TRADES.

[Witnesses:—Four Master Builders; two Timber Merchants; one Master Painter, late a journeyman; one Brewer, employer of Builders; one Journeyman Bricklayer (Secretary to the Friendly Society of Operative Bricklayers); one Journeyman Plasterer (Secretary to the Plasterers' Society); one Journeyman Painter (Member of the Painters' Society); two Journeymen Sawyers (members of the Sawyers' Society); two Journeymen Carpenters (one belonging to the General Society of Carpenters, the other, the Secretary of the Regular Body of Carpenters); one Foreman Carpenter (member of the Regular Body of Carpenters).

MASTER BUILDERS employ bricklayers, masons, sawyers, carpenters, plasterers, and painters. Each of these trades has a separate Society of its own, of which some notice will be found hereafter, but for some purposes they may be all treated together, since the rules of all are in the main similar, and affect the same employers; and a violation of the rules of any one of the societies is avenged by the members of the others.

Master builders in Dublin may be divided (as indeed may masters in almost every trade and in every place) into two classes. The one are called regular employers, that is, those who employ unionist operatives (the bulk of whom have been duly apprenticed), conform to the usual rules of the trade, and pay the required standard wages. The others, the irregular employers, who do not employ unionists, do not conform to the rules, and who pay wages which are never uniform, and almost always are below the standard wage. The latter class aims at cheap production, and the means they use are either to import the material manufactured from a foreign cheaper labour market, or to employ labourers on the spot at a reduced wage. Accordingly we find that masters of this class connected with the Dublin building trade import timber ready sawn from America, or have their Irish timber sawn by country labourers in the woods, where it has been felled; that they do not pay the same wages as other masters, even when these have been made the subject of a special agreement between the masters as a body on the one hand, and the Union representing the operatives on the other; and that, when these reduced wages are refused by unionists, they resort to the employment of "colts," that is, journeymen who have not been regularly apprenticed, of apprentices multiplied *ad libitum*, of country hands brought up to town for the purpose, and of foreign hands imported from Scotland. Nor is evidence wanting that the worst specimens of their class are in the habit, for the sole purpose of lowering wages, of concentrating an excessive number of country labourers upon a distant point, or that payment is made frequently unpunctually, sometimes in truck, and sometimes even in bad copper money. But one charge of this last description, brought against a respectable master, was completely rebutted. It need not be said that labourers of this description, apprentices, 'colts,' or country hands imperfectly trained, Scotchmen who have emigrated because their skill does not insure them a livelihood at home, are but poor workmen who are merely fitted for rough work, or do other work only in an inferior way.

Irregular masters find the bulk of their business in the execution of large contracts, and their best customers in public boards, above all in Government, which invariably takes the lowest tender. In consequence, we are not surprised to learn that at the public works the lowest wage is given, and the intervention of middle-men practised, or to hear of "the coarse work for the Bank of Ireland," or of an inferior description of work for the Board of Works, not held much in account by labourers, or of barrack furniture imported from England, which proves to be mere rubbish. These irregular masters, be it said, although before the committee they are represented by three out of the four master witnesses, by no means constitute the majority of masters, or monopolize the bulk of the building business in Dublin. At present, some having failed or retired, there are remaining but three firms of this description; and it is in evidence that the regular masters have had not only the exclusive enjoyment of the small jobs,

such as shop-fronts, &c., but at least two-thirds of the public work done for many years.

The accounts of the trade unions curiously differ, as they proceed from the one class of employers or the other.

Mr. Egan, the only one, out of the four master builders examined by the Committee, who is a regular employer, is in extensive business, and speaks from an experience of forty years. He deposes as follows:—

"I have never employed any workmen but the body-men (*i. e.* unionists) in the course of my life. . . . . I pay 4*s.* 8*d.* (the standard wages) to all alike, whether superior or inferior; I endeavour to select the best workmen, and I think the wages fair between master and man. . . . I have never had any difference with my men, except on one occasion before 1826, when I reluctantly yielded to a demand of the carpenters for 6*d.* a day extra for working beyond the town circle.* . . . . They have never interfered with me. . . . I employ the body-men because I think them the best workmen, and the most respectable class. . . . . I could not have better men, or more respectable. . . . . I have always treated them with respect, and they have treated me in return with respect and gratitude."

This evidently is a more favourable representation of the unions than would be furnished by masters in general, to whom the union regulations are in many respects vexatious; for we find that in 1838, they drew up an elaborate protest against the rules of the carpenters, which in principle are the same as the rules of the other unions.† But the tone of the document itself, and of the discussion which ensued, is one of respect from the masters towards the union; and if any further evidence were required to prove the friendly relations existing between the two bodies, it would be furnished by the fact that not one of the regular employers came forward to the committee to give evidence against the rules or proceedings of the unions.

On the other hand, the irregular masters bring the following charges against the Union. 1st. That their rules are impracticable, and produce an exorbitant rate of wages. 2nd. That their rules are enforced by constant strikes, and also by organized violence of the most terrific character. 3rdly. That the combinations so carried on are the cause of the depression of the whole building trade.

Rules.

As to the first charge, the rules complained of as maintaining excessive wages are those which prohibit piecework, which require a daily wage at once uniform and exorbitant, and which place restrictions as to the number of apprentices. Each of these rules may be considered separately.

The rule against piecework.—Operatives connected with the building trade (except sawyers) are paid by the day; but the amount of work to be done in a day is not, as by one master is represented, limited by any rule. Piecework, naturally the most

* This charge is now no longer customary.

† The protest, and discussion and resolutions consequent thereon, will be found at length in the separate account of the carpenters.

convenient system for both employer and operative, is prohibited to be done for any *master*, though it is permitted to operatives who job for private individuals. The reason for this prohibition is that piecework offers to those masters who are unscrupulous more opportunities than day-work for the reduction of wages. And it is clear that with some masters reduction of wages, as well as other advantages, is the motive of their objection to day-work, for a case is given in evidence of a timber-merchant who was most loud in his denunciations of day-work amongst the sawyers, and who, after a scale of prices by the piece had been settled upon between the masters in a body on one side, and the Union on the other, not only did not adhere to this scale, but in particular branches of work, where he thought to save by it, substituted a payment of wages by the day.

Still it is clear that this prohibition of piecework is felt by the whole body of master builders to be a real inconvenience, and in their resolutions of 1838 they decline in future to be bound by it.

Rule as to a uniform Wage.—What the unions enforce is not in terms a uniform, but a minimum wage; but this becomes uniform, because the masters (except in very rare cases) treat it as a maximum. It is a rule of which masters generally, not irregular masters only, complain, and in the early part of the year 1838, it was made the subject of a special paper, drawn up by the regular masters, and addressed to the regular body of carpenters. The objections taken to it were that the skill of operatives varies, and that the Union, while requiring a uniform rate, omits upon the admission of members to the body to apply any test of their efficiency. And the masters proposed to substitute for it a classification of wages according to the abilities of the workman. This classification was to be established in the following manner:—A scale of prices for the principal portions of carpenters' work to be drawn up, the prices to correspond to the highest daily wages paid in the city, and to be published in the form of a pamphlet authorized by the names of deputies from both employers and operatives; the right to belong to either party,—to an operative who might think his wages too low, or to a master that they were too high,—to demand that work for a few days be paid for by the piece according to this scale, the result so ascertained by the master to determine the amount of daily wages to be paid in future. To this proposal the regular carpenters replied in an elaborate paper. They upheld the rule requiring the uniform wage on the grounds that, as a fact, there existed amongst workmen a general equality of productive capabilities; that a sufficient stimulus to self-improvement was, even under a uniform wage system, provided to the workman by prospect of greater permanency of employment; that the current wages had been the medium wage for the last forty years, and were rather below than above the average deserts, being struck at the sum which every workman was worth, except one disabled by some particular cause; and that this exceptional case was provided for by the 26th rule, which allowed a lower wage to a workman thrice dismissed

for incompetency. On the other hand, they objected to the classification proposed by the masters, on the ground that the examination, by which it was to be determined, was impracticable,—it would be a partial examination, extending over only one or more of the very numerous branches of carpentry, or, if entire, the skill of the workman would be liable to be misestimated by the whimsical judgment of the particular employer, or to be wilfully depreciated by the unscrupulous master who desired only to reduce wages. The result of this discussion was that the masters reluctantly agreed to continue the system of uniform payment (except, as before, in cases of marked inefficiency), but passed a resolution that no operative should be entitled to full journeyman's wages unless he had served a regular apprenticeship, and that a proper qualification and test should be established for admission into the Union. It does not appear whether this resolution was confirmed or rejected by the Union.

The amount of the uniform wage was also at the same time discussed. The operatives maintained, as has been already stated, that the then wage of 4*s.* 8*d.* per diem was a fair wage. The masters, by their final resolutions, determined that, in consequence of the competition, the wages must be reduced to 4*s.* 4*d.* per diem. This resolution, not passed, be it noted, till 1838, may throw some light upon the averment of the irregular employers, that for many years the wages required by the Union were "enormous."

The Rules against Apprentices.—In the building trade, apprentices can be taken either indentured or not indentured, and either by masters or men. In general they receive no remuneration for the first two or three years, and afterwards some slight wages, 7*s.* or 8*s.* a week as may be agreed upon, or per tariff. Apprenticeship having for its sole object the recruital of the ranks of the journeymen thinned by the course of time, and being based on the principle of gratuitous instruction on the one side, and gratuitous or slightly paid labour on the other, a clear perversion exists, where apprentices are multiplied simply for the purpose of cheapening labour. This perversion leads to serious consequences; not only is no justice done to the apprentice, who, instead of learning his trade systematically, has to work upon that which will most immediately *pay* his master; but the market is over-supplied with unskilled labour, wages sink, the work is slopped, and trade is discredited. In the Dublin building trade, this perversion cannot be charged to the masters as a class; it is occasionally practised by low contractors, but, as a general rule, regular employers find apprentices a trouble, take only a few of them, and those by indenture; and disputes rarely occur concerning apprentices taken by masters. In the plastering trade indeed not one has happened within recollection; and the masters are not even nominally restricted as to the number of their own apprentices. But with operatives, who are accustomed to undertake jobbing work on a small scale, it is otherwise; being without capital, they cannot afford to pay their labour well, and so they are apt to take to themselves, without stint and

without indenture, apprentices who are termed club apprentices, to employ them on jobs so long as their business lasts, and then to turn them adrift to push their own way for themselves, either to seek a new master, or to work as unapprenticed journeymen. This evil is very common in Dublin; one witness deposes that many apprentices do not know who their master is, another that four-fifths of the carpenters are apprentices, a proportion far greater than is required to keep up the supply of journeymen.

The various Unions endeavour to provide remedies in the shape of restrictive rules, which will be specified hereafter, as each trade receives separate mention. But considered generally, some of their rules seem altogether right, as the rule limiting each sawyer to one apprentice, based on the principle that no man should have more apprentices than he can instruct and keep in employment; others not perhaps wrong in principle, but pushed to excess, as the rule that denies admission to the Union to non-apprenticed workmen, except on payment of the highly penal sum of six or seven pounds. Other rules again, though having a good object, are altogether to be condemned, such as *absolute* restrictions upon the numbers of apprentices, or prohibitions to take an apprentice, except a son or near relation, or prohibition to members, except of a certain standing in the community, to take apprentices at all. And in general the restrictions are of a most vexatiously minute character.

These rules, as has been said, are directed not so much against the masters, but against the men, the members of their own Union; but they affect the masters, inasmuch as the Union legalizes a strike against a master, who, though he may have no apprentices of his own, employs any operative who has more than the recognised number of apprentices. But against regular masters, who are kind to their men, it appears that these rules are very rarely, if ever enforced; it is only when the master is an irregular or an unpopular employer, that the unionists strike, as soon as a journeyman with too many apprentices is brought into the yard. Actual abuse of these rules, and the constant possibility of their arbitrary enforcement, induced the regular masters, in the year 1838, to make a determined protest against them. These masters however, fully recognised the necessity of some restrictions as to apprentices, and therefore they proposed that the number of apprentices should be still limited, though not, as before, absolutely, but in proportion to the number of journeymen in the same yard; and further, that a full term of seven years' servitude should be required, to found a title to the standard wage of a journeyman.

Strikes and Violence.

This forms the second charge against the Union. It is not complained of by the regular employers, who complied with the rules prohibiting piecework and requiring the uniform wage, and received indulgence as to apprentices, wherever (which was seldom the case) that indulgence was required. But against the irregular employers, who were known to attempt reductions of wages, the

minor rules were with vexatious rigour enforced by constant strikes, and the more important rules by intimidation and violence. This is an undoubted fact, admitted even by Mr. Egan, who acknowledges that, if he desired to resist the Union, he would, nevertheless, not dare to do so. And the violence is not of the ordinary kind, not casual, temporary, or confined to outrages upon fellow workmen, but organized, public, murderous to both master and man, and continuing up to the present time. To give an idea to English readers of the enormity of these acts, the following may be selected out of a long list, authenticated by the personal knowledge, if not the personal suffering of the witnesses:—

In 1820, a Mr. Carolin, a master builder, employed in his yard two men at *higher* than the standard wages, who happened to be non-unionists, and also refused to grant the usual extra wage for work done in the country. For the breach of these two rules, a mob of 50 to 100 workmen assaulted his house, beat him and his two sons severely, and in the struggle he shot a man, was tried, and the jury found a verdict of Justifiable Homicide. In 1827, one of the sons had vitriol thrown upon him, and was severely beaten in the streets of Dublin.

In 1826, Mr. Fagan, one of the deponents before the Committee, employed in his timber yard, a man by the name of Hanlon, a rough country sawyer; the wages paid to him and his apprentice were not the usual weekly wages of 52*s*., but wages by the piece, amounting only to 30*s*. or 35*s*. This was an offence against the Union laws, and Mr. Fagan, fearing violence, allowed him to go home one hour earlier than the other workmen. Preconcerted measures were adopted for his murder: lots were drawn to decide those who should undertake it, any one upon whom the lot fell being bound to go himself, or to provide a paid substitute, and many men, otherwise of excellent character, were drawn in the lot; the gang were three or four days out without seeing Hanlon, but one day he was present at a sawyer's funeral; the leader of the gang brought thirty-two of the men into a public-house, gave them a glass of spirits each, and then they fell upon him in the public street, and beat him dreadfully with their "opening sticks," some even going back and killing him, as he lay already on the point of death. Many men were tried for this murder, and defended at the expense of the Union, and several were hanged for it.

In 1836, a timber merchant of the name of Curry, also one of the witnesses before the Committee, imported from America a quantity of boards already sawn to the thickness of one inch. A message was sent to him through his clerk, from one of the sawyers in his yard, that he had better not have imported these deals, and a printed notice was served afterwards on each of the retail-yard keepers in the city, that if those planks were purchased by them, the sawyers would not cut any timber which those retail sellers might purchase from Mr. Curry's establishment. Nevertheless, a Mr. Mason, a manufacturer, trusting to the fact that he had never yet had a quarrel

with the sawyers, agreed to buy some. A few days afterwards he was beaten brutally in a public street and injured for life. Mr. Curry then entered into a compromise with an agent of the sawyers, not to sell the planks in Dublin; and accordingly they were at a great loss shipped off to Liverpool, and there sold by auction; and Mr. Curry did not venture to import any more of the same sort.

Mr. Murray, another of the witnesses, deposes that since the year 1826 the following outrages have been perpetrated on him and his men:—his bricklayers were beaten for not asking extra country-wages; his country sawyers, whilst working in the daytime in his yard, were thrice assaulted and beaten by a gang of unionists; his stone-cutter foreman was shot; he himself was beaten at Clonmel, and harassed by threatening letters,—and finally his house and establishment were in the early part of 1838, burnt down, evidently by an incendiary.

This catalogue of crimes might be indefinitely extended. The operatives examined cannot deny the commission of the acts themselves; they simply dispute some of the circumstances connected therewith, attribute them to private malice or accidental collision, and appealing to the frequent investigations by the police of the Union papers, strenuously deny that they were organized by the Union. But the fact that so many of these crimes, although committed by gangs and in open day, went unpunished, is a sure proof that the Union connived at them, if it did not absolutely organize them. Nor, in two instances, is direct evidence wanting. A witness, now a master painter, but once a member of the Union, deposes that, in 1820, the President of the Society himself proposed that "colts" should be beaten, and that the Society should pay men to do it; that members out of employ were drawn for the business by lot, and were led on by a man called "The General," who received 30*s.* a week and his clothes; that to meet these expenses, a levy of 3*s.* 3*d.* per week was imposed upon members of the Society, and further money borrowed, £20 from the carpenters and £10 from the paperstainers; that violence was a matter of everyday occurrence, and that, amongst others, the witness himself was assaulted by "the General" and his gang, and compelled to promise to pay the levy. Again, the same witness deposes that, in 1826, when there was a general strike throughout all the trades to establish the same wages in the English as in the former Irish currency, it was proposed in the committee that two men who had not struck should be "slated," *i.e.* beaten. The witness was himself a member of the committee, and threatened to inform if the proposition was proceeded with. It was thereupon withdrawn and the meeting broke up; but immediately aftewards some of the more violent committee-men met secretly together, and the result was that the next morning the two men were severely beaten, and the Society, as a body, so far from condemning the outrage, did not disguise their satisfaction.

Neverthless these crimes naturally produced a strong reaction within the Unions themselves. This appears to have been especially the case

after the revelations made in the trial of the murderers of Hanlon, in the year 1826, and the public abhorrence thereby created. The respectable operatives organized themselves into a pacific party, and opposed acts of violence; and in the painters' trade they went to the length of separating themselves altogether from the Union, and forming an independent body. Acts of violence, in consequence, became more rare, and it seems pretty clear that they have been, on the whole, steadily on the decrease since the repeal of the Combination Laws, although this is denied by two masters, who themselves have been the principal sufferers from these outrages.

Depression of the Trade.

The third charge brought against the Union is that, by keeping up exorbitant wages through intimidation, it has produced in the building trade that depression which on all sides is admitted to exist. This charge, it is to be observed, proceeds not from the bulk of the master builders, but only from that section which is constituted by the irregular employers. As to these, no doubt it is in a measure true. The Union is bent upon driving every employer of this class out of the market, whether by fair means or foul; it compels him to have his operatives all unionists or all non-unionists; if he has all unionists, he cannot, without an immediate strike in his yard, procure labour any cheaper than his neighbours, whom he desires to undersell; if, on the other hand (as is more usual), he breaks into open war with the Union, he has to fall back upon other workmen, who will take indeed low wages, but who can offer only inferior skill; and in either case he is personally exposed to the most formidable violence. It would be surprising, if, under these conditions his trade could thrive. However, the troubles even of irregular employers must in some measure be ascribed to their habit of making the lowest possible tenders for large contracts, and thus involving themselves in the most hazardous speculations.

But, as to the stagnation of the building trade generally, it seems more fair to attribute this to causes over which the operatives have no control. The foremost of these is the Union. "Before that event," it is stated in a paper prepared by the carpenters in the year 1828, "the public works alone carried on in Dublin by the Government Boards gave employment to above 2000 carpenters; at the same time there were upwards of 2,300 employed in the buildings in public squares, &c., without including the number employed in breweries, distilleries, and sugar bakeries, and other large establishments flourishing in Dublin." Another cause, verified by the testimony not only of operatives, but of a master builder of the irregular class, who has given up his business as a failing concern, is that Dublin has been overbuilt with houses, erected by builders speculating on purchasers, to be attracted by what was then thought a likely prospect—a domestic Parliament. A third cause is competition. This same master says:—"I attribute the losses of the trade more to employers than to the workmen; one is cutting

against another, so that no man is properly paid." And he declares that, as things are now, he would leave Dublin, even if there was no combination. Lastly, the acknowledged superabundance of apprentices and cheap labour, though it would not lower the profits of masters, sufficiently accounts for the depressed state of the operatives.

DUBLIN CARPENTERS.

[Witnesses:—A Journeyman, member of the General Society of Carpenters; a Journeyman, Secretary to the Regular Body of Carpenters; a Foreman, member of the Regular Body of Carpenters.]

CARPENTERS in Dublin may be divided into three classes. 1. Those who are members of no Union. 2. Members of the General Society of Carpenters, and, 3. Members of the Regular Body of Carpenters. —The first are decidedly the lowest class: they consist of operatives, who have never been apprenticed, and are brought up from the country, or elsewhere, and put to the coarsest work for very low wages: they pass by the opprobrious title of 'colts.' The General Society of Carpenters, which numbers about 400 members, is one apparently of recent establishment, professing "to assist men when they are in distress, to enable men, when trade is bad in one town, to pass to the next, and to oppose masters when they would offer to reduce wages, or do any other act of tyranny." It accomplishes this latter object in the usual manner, by providing aliment to those who strike, rather than submit to reduction: the aliment being at the rate of half of the previous wages.

These strikes are said to have been frequently successful. It may be inferred, though it is not stated, that this Society does nominally require some uniform, or minimum wage: but either this requisition is not enforced, or the minimum must be below the standard wage established by the Regular Body of Carpenters, for this latter body refuses to recognise the Society, treats the members of it as mere "colts," and declines to work with them. And in January, 1838, there was a battle between the members of the two Societies in the open streets, and some men were killed.

The Regular Body of Carpenters, which does not contain more than 250 members, is the ancient Society, having for its objects "to apprentice the orphans, to assist the widows, bury the dead, assist distressed members, and by a regular combination to support a fair rate of wages." It also has built an asylum for its aged and infirm members, at the expense of nearly £1000, and has in contemplation the building of a practical school. It is governed by a Committee of six, appointed by ballot, who hold office for three months, and during that term meet twice a week; the secretary receives a salary of £25 per annum.

What are the rules of this Society, and what are the objections brought against them, will best appear from some resolutions passed at a meeting of the regular master builders of Dublin, held in February, 1838, for the purpose of considering the regulations of

operatives in the various building departments. The resolutions were prefaced by a declaration that the meeting disclaimed any intention of acting in any degree hostilely to the operatives, and was desirous of promoting a friendly understanding with them, and advancing the interests of both employers and employed : but that the printed rules of the different communities, produced at the meeting, appeared to the masters in various particulars unjust, illegal, arbitrary, and injurious to trade in general. The resolutions themselves purported to specify those which were most objectionable, and ran as follows :—

"'Rule 1. That every person from the country, not having worked more than one month in the city of Dublin, or within ten miles thereof, being desirous of becoming a member of this community, shall be admitted, on paying the sum of seven guineas, or ten guineas to be the admission of colts, each person paying half the sum at first payment.'—Resolved, that this rule is injurious not only to the operative, and to the employer, but to the public at large, inasmuch as no sufficient qualification is required by the body to ascertain the capabilities of the applicant; he is therefore forced on the employer at the full rate of wages, although he may be a very inferior workman; besides, all persons have a legal and just right to procure employment in the best possible way, and such taxation almost prohibits their doing so.—'Rule 2. That every person who has served seven years in a lawful manner to the house-carpenter business in the city of Dublin, and has not worked more than one month after said servitude before his application to join this community, shall be admitted on paying the sum of 13*s.*; and if known to work in an unlawful shop, or under the regular wages, shall pay the same as a colt, if not granted liberty to work in such shop.' That we consider the concluding part of this rule as oppressive, as circumstances might occur, from the necessity of the individual, which would oblige him to seek employment wherever he could obtain it.—'Rule 5. That no regular employer's boy be allowed to finish his time amongst the men, should his master cease being an employer, or decline business, unless he be transferred to another employer.' That we consider this rule as oppressive, inasmuch as it precludes the master from deriving that benefit to which he is justly entitled from his apprentice.—'Rule 6. That no carpenter be allowed to take or hold more than three apprentices at any time, that is, two indented and one transferred, or two transferred and one indented; the transferred boy or boys must be in all cases those who were originally bound to regular employers or regular operatives: no firm to take advantage of this rule, as there are no more apprentices allowed to any firm than there are to any single or individual employer.' That we consider this rule to be an arbitrary restriction, inasmuch as it interferes with legal rights and freedom.—'Rule 7. That any member of this community becoming an employer, and taking an apprentice, if he continues an employer for half the boy's time, and after becomes a working man, that boy shall be transferred to a regular employer,'

That this rule we consider unjust to the working man; should he be unsuccessful in business, he has a strong claim on his former fellow-workmen, and should be allowed to retain the advantage to be derived from the labour of his apprentice.—'Rule 11. That any regular boy, while serving his apprenticeship, transgressing so far as to go into any irregular employment, and remaining there after getting a proper intimation of the effect of so doing, shall forfeit all claim on trade, and be received as a colt.' That this rule is also unjust and oppressive, as circumstances of necessity may oblige the individual to avail himself of such employment as he can obtain.—'Rule 13. That any member being in the country for the space of three years, shall pay his arrears on coming to town; also any member being five years a stranger from community, and working within the limits, when rejoining trade, shall in every case be subject to the penalty of ten guineas; such members to be treated in every respect as a country member as regards taking apprentices.' That this rule infringes on the rights of the operative, inasmuch as he that was once qualified amongst his fellows should be at liberty to act as his circumstances or necessities may require.—'Rule 14. That any member of this community giving information to any person not a member, or considered as such, of any business taking place, or rules adopted at any summoned meeting or otherwise of community, be fined one guinea and a crown for every such offence.' That if the first part of this rule refer to answering a proper and lawful question put by his employer, we consider it unjust.—'Rule 15. That all members of this community do take three-fourths of an hour to breakfast, and one hour to dinner, from the 1st day of March until the 14th day of October, when the dinner hour shall cease until the 1st day of March following; one hour to be taken to breakfast, from the 14th of October until the 1st of the ensuing March; candle light to commence on the 1st day of November, and continue until the 1st day of the ensuing February; no shop to make private regulations contrary to these rules, under a fine of one guinea to each member of such shop.' That the regular working day consists of 10½ hours, and that such time should be allowed to all employers during the year by their operatives.—'Rule 16. Let it be particularly understood by all who are concerned in these rules, that the quarter of an hour usually worked after six in the evening, is given merely as a remuneration for any time, such as a few minutes that any man might be late in the morning or at meal-times.' That the construction of this note would or might extend too far, and sanction late attendance; the custom originated from being allowed an additional quarter of an hour at breakfast more than formerly was enjoyed by the operatives.—'Rule 17. That no member shall give a detailed return of any work, except for jobbing, which may be detailed, under a fine of 10*s.* 6*d.* for each violation.' That we consider this not only dishonest, but a cloak for idleness and inefficiency; how is a price to be fixed on a difficult piece of work, except by a detailed account being kept of the time occupied in executing it?—'Rule 18.

That no member of this community shall work for lower wages than 4*s.* 8*d.* per day within the limits, namely, ten miles of the city of Dublin, any member of the community being allowed to contract with any employer beyond said limits for any wages he may get.' That we consider this a most unjust rule, inasmuch as the present rate of wages demanded by the workman is not based on equity, either to the employer or workman; the same rate of wages should not be paid to an incompetent workman as to the man of superior abilities and attention. A classification should therefore be adopted, according to the various capabilities of the workman.—'Rule 21. That any member or members of this community holding out in opposition, so that his shopmates are obliged to turn out against him or them, shall be fined the sum of one guinea and a half: that any member or members of this community that replaces any member or members on the turn-out, shall be fined three guineas.' That this rule we object to, as being most illegal: we have clearly a right to retain those whom we conceive most suitable in our employment, without the dictation or hindrance of any other man in the employment.—'Rule 22. That any member of trade who seeks employment by means of a letter of recommendation from any but a brother in trade, be fined the sum of one guinea, and if employed through the above means to be taken out of the employment.' That we consider this rule most unjust to the good and well-conducted workman, who might obtain employment by such means, as well as the employer, who should have the privilege of receiving the recommendation of his friend.—'Rule 28. That no member or members of this community shall take piecework from any carpenter or employer where men are employed by the day, under a fine of two guineas.' That we consider we should be at liberty to have the same privilege of any other citizen, should circumstances occur to render this an advantage to all parties.—'Rule 33. That no workingman's boy be allowed to work under the following stipulated wages; viz., after the first year, 7*s.* 6*d.* per week; second ditto, 9*s.* 9*d.*; third ditto, 12*s.*; fourth ditto, 16*s.* 3*d.*; fifth ditto, 19*s.*; sixth ditto, 21*s.* 8*d.*' That a stipulated rate of wages is in all cases improper, particularly so to boys, who may be indolent, and from the fact of their being entitled to certain wages from service of time only, without ability, that feeling of energy to excel in learning their trade, which may make the good and sufficient workman, is lowered.—'Rule 34. That the son of a member of this community, who served his time in the country, shall be admitted on the same terms as a Dublin apprentice, or on the demise of his father shall have liberty to work until he finishes his time, provided his father had been a free member before he was bound apprentice. Any country apprentice generally known by the name of a club apprentice, shall not be allowed to serve a Dublin employer any part of his time that may be wanting to complete the whole; nor shall such apprentice be allowed to bind himself for seven years to a Dublin employer. All apprentices when working in the city, or within its limits, to keep their

masters' tickets clear. That all boys whose masters are indulged with a free ticket, shall, at the expiration of four years, come under the same subscription as if their masters had not been so indulged. N.B.—All foremen to be considered as working men.' That this rule interferes with the lawful rights of society; an employer should be allowed to take any apprentice when and from whom he pleases, as should also the workman if he pleases. This rule, as employers, we cannot suffer, as we consider a foreman, under this obligation, cannot have that control over the workman which is so highly necessary, nor can he act faithfully in that capacity under such restrictions.—'Rule 37. That any member or members of this community who shall transgress so far through intoxication, or any other misconduct, so as to endanger the loss of any employment, it shall be at all times imperative on the council to take that man or men out of it, and replace him or them with men that they think most proper.' That while we appreciate the good intentions of the former part of this rule, we object to any man coming into our employment, under any circumstances, without our approbation."

On the 27th of February, the Regular Body of Carpenters replied, in an address, which simply declared their adherence to their rules, as a whole, but their readiness to adopt any modification that could be shown to advance the real interests of their employers. And a correspondence, which has been already related in the account of the building trade generally, then ensued, as to the possibility and expediency of introducing a classification of wages.

On the 11th of April, the master builders again met, and passed the following resolutions unanimously:—

"First.—Seven years to be the term of servitude to learn the carpenter trade, and no apprentice to be entitled to seek, or qualified to receive, journeyman's wages, until he has fully completed said term, to the entire satisfaction of his master.

"Second.—The number of apprentices to employers to be regulated and limited only according to the average number of men known to be employed in each shop.

"Third.—The regular working day to consist of 10½ hours during the entire year, exclusive of three-quarters of an hour to breakfast and one hour to dinner; the deficiency of time during the winter months to be made up by candle light, to commence and terminate according to mutual understanding betwixt the employers and employed.

"Fourth.—A detailed return of all work executed during the week to be given in on Saturday, or such other day as may be appointed, written in ink during the operative's own time.

"Fifth.—That it is quite at variance with the wishes of this meeting to deteriorate the value of labour, but as classification has been entirely objected to, we have, then, no means left of obtaining a fair return for money expended; for although there are very many men amongst the community possessed of genius, talent, and intelligence to a considerable extent, there are many others who are

only distinguished by their lamentable incapacity, and as the state of trade is not now what it has hitherto been, and as we are likewise totally disqualified, according to the present rate, from competition with some of our rivals; therefore, in order to strike a medium between the operative of talent, and him of incapacity, as well as for the other reasons assigned, in future £1 6*s*. per week be the standard wages, save and except where men, through infirmity or lack of talent, are known to be unable to earn that sum, in which case, an intimation to be given, either through the employer or foreman, to the men in the shop, to whose decision the value of any man or men so circumstanced be left, which shall, in all cases, be considered as final and conclusive during the period men of such description remain in the employment.

"Sixth.—Measurement, or piecework, to be undertaken in all new buildings where men are not employed by the day, although the employer may have other carpenters at different works, in his workshops or elsewhere.

"Seventh.—Foremen to be in all cases such persons as employers may think fit, and it shall be completely and entirely left to their own option to join the community or not, as they think proper.

"Eighth.—The wages of journeymen's apprentices to be according to mutual understanding, and no stipulated or fixed rate to be established for them, except what their talents entitle them to.

"Ninth.—Dublin carpenters, being employed seven miles outside the city, to work for such wages as they think proper, and during their absence to be in no wise amenable to these rules.

"Tenth.—A proper qualification and test to be established for applicants wishing to join the community.

"Eleventh.—That the foregoing resolutions shall, in future, be alone and only recognised and acknowledged as forming the basis for the rules of the carpenters' community of this city; and any infringement upon or addition thereto, except within the perfect spirit and meaning of said resolutions, shall be considered at variance with our just rights, and foreign to the good understanding it is our study to establish, and which ought to exist between employers and operatives, and which resolutions we are determined to uphold by every means in our power, in order to obtain their total and perfect fulfilment."

The final result of these negotiations is not mentioned, but it seems that the resolutions of the masters were, at all events, not at first accepted by the regular body of carpenters.

DUBLIN BRICKLAYERS.

[Witness:—The Secretary to the Friendly Society of Operative Bricklayers.]

Amongst the Bricklayers, as amongst the carpenters, are two societies. The "Old Body of Bricklayers," is a strong society, confined to Dublin alone; it insists for each of its members upon a uniform

wage of 4*s*. 8*d*. per diem, and regards the members of the other society, called the Friendly Society, and all other bricklayers alike as "colts."

The Friendly Society of Bricklayers is connected with other societies in England and Scotland, and has for its chief objects the relief of members suffering from sickness or accident, and the interment of members who die. As a trade society, it is evidently very weak, indeed the secretary admits that as yet it has done no good; it has never raised wages, or been successful in any one instance. Nominally there is required a uniform wage, but this wage is not 4*s*. 8*d*., but 4*s*. only per diem, and practically the members take what they can get. A short time ago a contractor reduced the wages of his men engaged upon a large job to 3*s*. 4*d*. per diem. Members of the society do not like to work with "colts," who have never been apprenticed, but still do so from necessity. They do not fetter their employers as to the choice of operatives, nor do they impose any restriction as to the number of apprentices, though the present number is felt to be excessive. A master represents that a bricklayer's wages in Dublin run from 20*s*. to 28*s*. per week, in Glasgow from 15*s*. to 20*s*., but that Dublin wages ought to be higher, since Dublin house-rent, coals, and clothing are dearer.

DUBLIN SAWYERS.

[Witnesses:—Two Timber Merchants; Two Journeymen Sawyers.]

This Society is confined to Dublin, and is not connected with any other trade.

The trade is one which, as compared with some others, needs little skill, and it is even said by some that for a sawyer no apprenticeship is necessary; and this will account for the large number of "colts" amongst sawyers, and the efforts made on one side to exclude them, on the other to admit them. Formerly sawyers had the odious distinction of being considered the most violent trade in support of their Union rules, and in 1826 they committed the murder of Hanlon, and up to the present day, outrages against irregular employers from time to time take place among them; but an operative declares that there is not one of all the rules in their book for which the trade would turn out.

Sawyers work and are paid in couples, top and bottom sawyer each receiving an equal share of the wages, except where the bottom sawyer is an apprentice, and then he is entitled to only one-third.

Formerly piecework was strenuously prohibited, and men were paid by the week, at 52*s*. the pair. A timber merchant deposes that this system of payment was abused by the men, who would not do a good day's work, and that in 1834 the masters and men met together and settled a uniform scale of prices by the piece, by which a smart pair of sawyers could earn, it is said, 60*s*. per week between them. This scale is enforced by the unionists, and complied with by the regular masters; others however declare it to be exorbitantly high, and em-

ploy "colts" at reduced and various wages, and even, in particular departments, when they find it economical, substitute the old system of daywork about which they used to complain.

An irregular master states that the Sawyers' Society resisted the employment of machinery at its first introduction, and up to the present day do not leave to the master free choice from amongst the unionists of what men he shall employ.

The rules as to apprentices are no longer strictly observed; according to the letter, no sawyer is allowed to take more than one apprentice, and that one must be a sawyer's son.

The master already referred to makes a statement that sawyers' wages in Dublin are, owing to the Union maintaining uniform prices, twice as high as country wages in England. The wages of Irish labourers or "colts" are, in the country near Dublin, 8*s.* or 9*s.* per week; in Meath 5*s.* per week; in King's County 4*s.* 6*d.* per week.

DUBLIN PLASTERERS' SOCIETY.

[Witness:—The Secretary to the Operative Plasterers' Soicety.]

THE rules of this Society are printed, and also published. Its objects are stated to be "to relieve the sick, to bury the dead, to provide for the widows and orphans of the deceased members; and, when the funds admit, to relieve the unemployed and distressed, and in many cases to relieve strangers that merely come to Dublin to look for employment; and when they cannot get employment, to provide funds to take them home." The contribution is 1½*d.* per week per member. The secretary is paid £10 per annum; there are about 220 members in the Society, and as many other plasterers in the trade besides. There is not work for one-half of the whole number of plasterers.

There was a strike in 1826, at the date of the change in the currency, and after two or three weeks the masters eventually gave way; wages were then settled, and have not since been altered. There is no uniform wage, but there are four different rates, varying between 20*s.* and 14*s.* per week; the rate for each workman is said to be determined by the Union Committee, who make a differlience with regard to age, inability, &c. But, it is clear, not much reance can be placed on this statement. The master may give more than these wages if he pleases, and some few men earn 42*s.* in a week.

The working hours are ten and three-quarters daily, without deduction. There has never been a dispute on this point.

No notice is required from either master or man to determine an engagement.

Piecework is not allowed to be done for master plasterers, but may be jobbed from other persons. Unionists do not work with non-unionists.

Masters are unrestricted as to their own apprentices, but members of the Union are not suffered to have more club apprentices than they have employment for. Also there are other rules respecting

apprentices which are still on the books, but are not strictly enforced. They are as follows :—

Rule 5. No second apprentice shall be taken to this business till the first has served five years, unless to make room for the son of a deceased member.

Rule 8. No member, till he is four years of community, shall take an apprentice, except his son ; after that time he may take his brother.

There has been no violence in this trade.

IRISH HOUSE PAINTERS.

[Witnesses :—A Journeyman Painter ; A Master Painter, late a Journeyman.]

THE evidence of these two witnesses is so irreconcilable that if one is accepted the other must be rejected *in toto*. Both are equally in a position to speak with authority. The journeyman is acting secretary to the Union; the master painter was a journeyman from the year 1818, when he ceased to be an apprentice, till the year 1830, when he became a master ; during the whole of this time, with the exception of two years and a half, he was a member of the Union, and during part of it on the committee, and for sixteen months president. Of the two, the master's account is more specific, and, it is probable, much more to be trusted.

In 1814 there were two societies in the painting trade, one the regular body, the other the colts, or " the legs and arms." In 1816, at the close of the war, they coalesced, from fear of a general reduction of wages. In 1827 another separation took place. The cause was, that the men elected for president and committeemen notorious " slaters," *i.e.*, advocates of violence, and associated much with the sawyers, at that time a most violent trade; the respectable part of the Society, fearful of outrages, withdrew, to the number of about seventy, and established a new Union, called St. Luke's Society. Those who remained, and who henceforth went by the name of " Magpies," had to recruit their numbers by taking in men who had not served their time, and also were reduced to work for lower wages. In 1835 the two societies were again amalgamated, in consequence of St. Luke's Society falling off in numbers. The present Union includes about one-half of the journeymen of the trade.

As to the rules of the Society, the journeyman produced a printed set, which, however, he represented to have not been strictly carried out in practice, especially with respect to apprentices; but the master deposes that these printed rules were never intended to be observed, but existed only as a blind to the public, and that the real rules were quite different, were written in a book called " Shine's book," and were kept secret.

The weekly subscription is 2*d.* per week ; the entrance-fee, if the journeyman is to be believed, varies, according to the means of the applicant and the discretion of the committee; 30*s.* is the lowest sum paid, £3 3*s.* the highest; this last is taken from those who have served their apprenticeship in the country.

The Society prohibits piecework.

As to wages, the journeyman represents that there are different rates, £1 7*s.* 6*d.*, £1 4*s.*, and £1 per week, and that which of these rates the workmen shall receive is a question settled, not by the master, but by the committee, who judge according to the ability of the man; and that £1 4*s.* is the minimum received by an efficient journeyman. The master states that £1 7*s.* 6*d.* is the minimum allowed by the Society, except in the case of certain shops to which "magpies" resorted in 1827, on the occasion of the rupture of the Society, and where the low rate of 24*s.* then established has continued up to the present time. He denies that the committee ever judge of the ability of the workman.

The journeyman deposes that the Union makes no law as to the hours of labour: the master, that the hours are from six A.M. to six P.M. deducting two hours for meals, and that the men are not allowed to work overtime.

According to the journeyman, the Union imposes no restriction in the matter of apprentices, except that the employer is compelled to bind his apprentice and take care of him. But the master gives an instance when there was a strike against himself, because he appointed a stranger as an apprentice instead of the son of one of his men who was desirous for the place: and asserts that, when he was in the trade, the rule allowing only two apprentices, or a third when the eldest of the two was in the last year of his term, was carried out.

The journeyman states that unionists are free to work with non-unionists; but the master again appeals to a strike amongst his own men, when they laid down the law to him in these words, "You must have all pigeons or all crows."

The journeyman represents that the funds of the Society are applied for the sick in preference to the unemployed, that the Union will not admit any except efficient workmen, and that this is the cause of the high wages enjoyed by unionists as compared with non-unionists: that they will expel a member for immorality, and did lately expel one for habitual drunkenness with which his employer charged him: and lastly, that they give to the employer an indemnity for the honesty of the workmen. The master on the other hand states that no sick were ever relieved whilst he was in the trade; that some Unionist workmen are mere botchers, whilst the men at present in his employ, and who are "colts," are some of the best men he has ever had: that he has known one unionist expelled for purloining a watch, but no other instance of the sort, and lastly that he has never heard of any indemnity having been either given or asked for.

The journeyman complains that masters frequently do not pay their men in full on Saturday night: and this, from the master's own account, appears to be frequently the case. Payment for over hours is frequently allowed to accumulate, and occasionally as much as 10*s.*, due for one week, is not paid till the week after.

A good number of Scotchmen are in the trade, and their number is daily increasing: the journeyman represents their presence as an accident resulting from a contract having been taken by a Scotchman, and states that they are about to join the Union, and that they now get full wages, viz., 26*s.* per week. The master, on the other hand, says that they are competitors with the Union, that they are as good workmen, but that they are ready to work for 16*s.* or 18*s.* per week in the country, whilst a Dublin unionist, if he is taken into the country, requires 32*s.* 6*d.* per week, *i.e.* 27*s.* 6*d.* full wages, 2*s.* for lodgings, and for going into the country 3*s.* extra.

Both master and journeyman are agreed in one point, that it is Combination which keeps up wages. It is to this cause that the journeyman attributes the fact that Dublin wages, generally, are nearly double the wages received in the country, and that the master attributes the difference between the wages of the Dublin Irish, and the Dublin Scotch painters. But one thinks the wages so kept up fair, the other exorbitant, and, judging by his own experience, that contracts will not pay unless carried out by "colts."

DUBLIN SHIPBUILDERS.

[Witnesses:—a Master Shipbuilder; a Timber Merchant.]

It is much to be regretted with regard to this trade, that the evidence is of so one-sided a character. The report, in all important particulars, has to rest upon the testimony of a single witness. This witness is a master shipbuilder, in many respects highly qualified to speak, for he served an apprenticeship in the trade at the beginning of the century, entered it as a master in 1812, continued in it till 1830, and is now agent to Lloyd's and inspector of shipping along the coast from Wicklow to Drogheda: but on the other hand his testimony is open to considerations arising from his personal circumstances, and also from the class of masters to which he belongs. After sinking capital to the extent of £5000 in his shipbuilding business in Dublin, and spending nearly twenty years of his life upon it, he totally abandoned it, compelled, according to his own account, by the impracticable rules of the trade union: and he is avowedly one of those masters who believe the regeneration of Dublin trade to lie in the multiplication of the number of apprentices, in other words, in stocking the market with more or less unskilled, but cheap labour. His evidence is confirmed by the evidence (so far as it goes) of a timber merchant, one not *directly* brought into contact with the regulations of the trade union of shipbuilders, and who has pursued his own trade upon the same principle of superseding unionist operatives by the employment of cheap labour in the shape of apprentices, country workmen, and "colts," or unapprenticed journeymen. It would have been far more satisfactory had there been an opportunity of comparing this evidence with counter statements, coming from an operative unionist, or from a master builder who had contrived to make a livelihood by the employment of unionist builders at their standard wage.

Dublin is stated to possess considerable advantages for the shipping trade. The country provides abundance of raw material, timber: and, even were it otherwise, there could be importation with advantage from England, since the expense of freight to Dublin is from twenty to twenty-five per cent. cheaper than to Scotland: a vast number of ships run to and from Dublin, and most of them are owned by Dublin merchants: it frequently happens from the pressure of trade that the orders given to English shipbuilders are more numerous than their stocks enable them to perform, and these would come to Dublin, if they could be executed there: lastly, ships built at Dublin are launched immediately into eighteen-feet-water.

But, in fact, the shipbuilding trade, whilst increasing at Belfast, Cork, Waterford, and Drogheda, is in Dublin not only stationary but decaying. In 1812 there were four shipbuilders, and there is but the same number now: in 1812 there were from two to three hundred operatives, now there are only one hundred. The last vessel of any size built there was in 1825: there is a smack of only forty-five tons which has now been two years on the stocks and is yet unfinished: the vessels are built in England and Scotland, and the large timber vessels in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The cause of this decay the master attributes to the Union. He says he has no doubt that, if the operatives would consent to do away with their rules and regulations, the Dublin masters could in the course of a fortnight or less raise a shipbuilding establishment to the extent of £100,000. The rules referred to are those restricting the number of apprentices, and enforcing an enormously high uniform wage. It does not appear what is the exact nature of the restriction as to apprentices, but it is represented that, according to the present system, only two men would be transferred every year from the apprentice-list to the journeymen-list, irrespective of the number of vacancies amongst the journeymen created by death or otherwise: and that at Dublin there are now no more than twenty, perhaps only ten, apprentices, whereas at Liverpool, where no restriction exists, there were at the time of the coronation no less than 2,000.

The uniform wage established by the union is 27*s.* per week; and the master states that half of them are not able to do 2*s.* worth of work in the day, although there are in Dublin *some* as good shipbuilding operatives as in any part of the world. Other rules, such as the one requiring no less than eight operatives to put a vessel into dock, &c., are mentioned as in principle obnoxious, but practically not material impediments.

The conjoined effect of these rules is represented by the master to be, to make shipbuilding in Dublin so expensive, that the masters there find it impossible to compete with English and other markets, and thus the trade is decayed, and unable even to perform the work which does fall to its lot. In support of this view, some facts are mentioned; one, that a gentleman, who was sent over from Scotland to Dublin to superintend the repair of a vessel that had got damaged in

Kingston harbour, said, if he had had any idea of what he was going to be subject to, he would have set fire to the ship sooner than have had her repaired in Dublin; another, that for repairing one ship of ninety tons, the shipwright's account for labour was three hundred and odd pounds, that is, upward of £3 per ton, whereas vessels can be bought in the north of England for 30*s.* per ton; a third, that owing to the delay in repairing, arising from the scarcity of operatives, underwriters have in many cases preferred to put themselves to the expense of having their vessels, which have put into Dublin in want of repair, towed thence by steamers over to Liverpool or Greenock, where, from the abundance of unrestricted labour, they can be repaired in a week.

It appears that it is only by means of striking that the shipbuilders enforce their rules against those who disregard them by taking in more than the regular number of apprentices or by giving less than the standard wage. There has been no violence amongst them for many years; the last outrages were about the year 1826, when an apprentice was beaten to death, and a body-guard of police was obliged to be in attendance for three days, whilst a vessel was coppered by "colts" and apprentices.

It is obvious that if there is really room for a shipbuilding trade at Dublin, and if the Union shut it out by rules which are at once impracticable and are not enforced by violence, importation of shipbuilders would be alike a justifiable, an easy, and a profitable step. It should be added, that at Cork the shipbuilding trade is on the increase, and at the same time there exists in that city a very strong combination of the operatives.

DUBLIN CANAL TRADE.

[Witnesses:—Two Boat-owners.]

The following statements refer to boat-owners or water-carriers from Dublin to the country towns, conveying goods to shopkeepers, or taking any species of freight. Each boat is given in charge to a captain, who finds two assistants and generally a horse for himself, and receives and divides the pay; the pay, settled many years ago at a meeting of masters and men, is never a matter of dispute; it is 50*s.* per week, or 32*s.* if the employer find the horse and his keep. Out of this sum, the captain pays 10*s.* to each of the men, and keeps the rest for himself. When the goods are put on board, the captain gives a receipt for them, but enters into no further written agreement; it often happens that, in the transit, goods are spoilt by neglect, or, upon delivery, are found deficient in quantity. Indeed, there is some suspicion that an organized system of pilfering goes on. On these occasions the master holds the captain responsible, and himself entitled to deduct from the wages enough to indemnify him for the loss. The men's union, however, at the same time prohibits the master from putting on board any supercargo at his own expense, and repudiates any such responsibility as attached to the captain, and will not tolerate

any deductions. More than this, they do not allow the captain of a boat to be dismissed by his master on any account whatever, not even for the grossest incapacity, neglect, or dishonesty. The way they enforce this rule is, that if any deductions are made, the captain strikes, and takes his men with him, or the captain is dismissed, and they go too. No members of the Union are suffered to take their place, and the intimidation practised is so strong, that it is impossible for the employer to procure boatmen who do not belong to the Union. The consequence is that the boat must lie idle, till the master yields, and reinstates the captain. One witness deposes that lately, at the end of a trip of one of his barges, twenty barrels of oats, value £11, were missing, and not accounted for; he dismissed the captain, but his boat had to lie eight months idle, and then he was compelled to take back the man into his service.

The masters represent that they are completely overpowered, and dare not resist. They give three instances of the impolicy of resistance. A master appointed a stranger, and shortly afterwards his boat was burnt. Another declined to appoint the son of a deceased captain in his father's place, and had his boat sunk. The same employer dismissed a man from another boat, and had this boat sunk also. But little reliance should be placed on these cases; in none of them did the employer take steps to procure legal redress, or had any evidence that the losses were the result of criminal intention, except that they were unaccounted for by those in charge of the boats at the time, and that they happened shortly after some cause of offence had been given to the Union.

The Union was established in 1822, and the masters state that its conduct has become much more oppressive and intimidating since the repeal of the combination laws.

The whole of this evidence must obviously be taken with some qualification, since there was no evidence given on the other side.

ACCOUNT

OF THE

WEAVERS' STRIKE AT PADIHAM

IN 1859.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By WILLIAM A. JEVONS.

This strike arose amongst the weavers of Padiham, in the month of March, 1859, and lasted about half a year.

Padiham is a large village, or rather a small town, in East Lancashire, situated between Burnley and Accrington, and containing about 8000 inhabitants. Its rise as a manufacturing town, dates from the opening of railway communication through the district. It has thirteen mills, three of which are exclusively for spinning. Four of the weaving establishments remained at work during the strike, and six were wholly or partially at a stand-still.

Blackburn is the leading manufacturing town in the East Lancashire district, and in Blackburn there is a powerful and well managed Union amongst the operatives, and also an Association among the masters. These two associations, in place of exhausting their strength in contests, in which *both* parties would inevitably be losers, have pulled well together—the result of which has been, that they agreed some years ago, upon lists of prices of the various descriptions of work in the cotton manufacture of the district, which lists are known as the Blackburn Standard Lists. Table number one of these lists gives the wages of the spinner, and was compiled and agreed to on the 1st of October, 1852. Another table gives loomers' wages, and was agreed to on the 6th July, 1853; a third, containing the wages for winding, beam-warping, and tape-sizing, is dated the 17th of August, 1853; and the fourth is of weavers' wages, compiled on the 17th of August, 1853. These tables do not constitute an invariable fixed rate, but form a sort of basis, on which the calculations of wages are made, and with reference to which every rise or fall is regulated. For example—the spinners at Blackburn now receive an advance of 15 per cent., and the weavers an advance of 5 per cent. on the printed tables. The advance of wages

in Blackburn is agreed upon by the respective committees of the masters and men, and when adopted, is made uniformly and simultaneously throughout the branch of trade affected by it.

The table of weavers' wages is a very complicated one, and the system of calculation on which it is based, one which it would be in vain to attempt to explain fully on paper, without diagrams, to any one not practically acquainted with the machinery. The amount of labour of a weaver superintending a power-loom cannot be estimated by the mere number of pieces of cloth woven, without taking into consideration the nature of the machinery with which he is working, and the description of cloth that he is weaving. A loom employed on a cloth of loose texture, would of course turn out a greater quantity than one employed on cloth of a fine and close texture; and, if the weavers were paid by the piece, without reference to the fineness of the cloth, a weaver employed on coarse cloth would receive three or four times the amount of wages earned by one employed on fine cloth. The object of the table in question is to give an easy means of rectifying this inequality, and equalizing the amounts earned by persons employed on different descriptions of cloth, fixing of course a low rate for coarse cloths and a high rate for fine ones. These rates vary for pieces of the same length and width, as much as from 3·98 of a penny to 15·37, and are expressed in decimals. In order to fix the amount of wages by this table, there must be ascertained, first the fineness of the reed, which determines the number of threads in the warp, and is expressed as a reed containing so many dwts. per inch ; second, the thickness of the thread in the warp and in the weft ; third, the number of threads in the weft, expressed as the number of picks per quarter of an inch of the cloth, each pick or thread of course representing one throw of the shuttle ; fourth, the width of the loom ; fifth, the width of the cloth ; and sixth, the length of the piece of cloth.

The most important item in this table is obviously the number of picks, as that represents the number of throws of the shuttle. The number of threads in a quarter of an inch of cloth would appear to be an easy matter to determine by a magnifying glass ; but in practice that test is considered not sufficiently accurate, on account of the stretching of the cloth, and a complicated calculation is resorted to, in order to obtain the result. It is impossible to explain the principle of this calculation without a diagram, and it must suffice to say that it is based on the circumference of a beam, called the emery beam, and the number of teeth in five different wheels. One step in this calculation gives a figure called the dividend, an expression which will occur in the documents I shall have to allude to, and this dividend being divided by the number of teeth on the wheel called the change wheel, gives the number of picks in a quarter of an inch of the cloth woven.

In this calculation the number of teeth in the wheels is an item which may be determined with ease and perfect accuracy, but the circumference of the emery beam is a matter which requires more

nicety. The emery beam is a round wooden beam, covered with two coatings of glue, strewed with ground glass, and its use is to draw the cloth off as it is woven. The cloth passes partly round the emery beam, and, owing to the rough surface of the beam, adheres to it, so that the rotation of the beam draws the warp through the loom.

When these beams have been some time in use, the rough coating gets wholly or partially worn off, and requires renewing. This coating on the beam increases its circumference about a quarter of an inch, and consequently, when worn, the circumference of the beam is diminished. Re-coating these beams is called adjusting the emery beams. Part of the disputes at Padiham turned on the adjusting of the emery beams, and the alleged deficiency in their circumference; but when it is remembered what the object of the emery beam is, it will be perceived that it was as much the interest of the masters, as of the operatives, to have the emery beams in proper order, and of the right circumference.

To the foregoing explanation it should be added, that according to directions appended to the Blackburn Standard List, certain allowances are to be made for looms of widths intermediate between those given in the table, and also for reeds of intermediate descriptions.

From the complicated nature of this calculation, and the number of the data on which it depends, it will be obvious that but few of the weavers would be competent to determine whether the prices they were paid for their work were or were not according to the Blackburn standard rates.

In giving the details of the Padiham dispute I have adopted the following plan. I have mainly relied upon published documents, and have given such of the statements put forth by the parties to the dispute as appeared of sufficient importance to extract. I have also had the benefit of receiving information from a master manufacturer of the neighbourhood, whose men were not concerned in the strike, and from two intelligent tradesmen of the town, both of whom had been members of a committee formed for the purpose of mediating in the dispute, and one of whom was apparently induced to think the men in the right, the other the masters. All my informants had taken pains to acquant themselves, at the time of the strike, with the merits of the case, and had collected documents bearing upon it. As to the immediate parties to the dispute, they have been applied to by the secretary of the committee to whom this report is addressed to furnish statements, but have not done so; I have, however, found the case of each side pretty fully stated in published documents, the opposing statements of which appear so contradictory of each other, that it would probably have served no useful purpose to take the personal testimony of the disputants, particularly as there is in this case, as will presently be seen, the unusual advantage of having the principal point in dispute examined into and adjudicated upon by disinterested third parties, whose means of forming a correct conclusion were much superior to any that could be enjoyed by an inquirer at a distance, relying upon testimony merely.

Previously to the strike there had not been a good feeling between the Padiham operatives and the masters. The existence of this ill-feeling I hear from several sources, and I cannot doubt the fact; but the precise cause of it is more difficult to determine. It probably arose from faults on both sides. Some of the masters, I am informed, were persons who had comparatively recently sprung from the operative class; and though that in itself is no reproach to them, but the reverse, it might naturally be expected that the operatives would be less ready to submit to a master who had recently been one amongst themselves, than to one who had always been in a station above them. At one of the public meetings I find it thrown in the teeth of one of the masters, that he had formerly been concerned in a dispute on the wages question on the other side.

The Padiham operative weavers, on the other hand, are known even amongst the Lancashire operatives as a rude and independent race. Some years before the strike they had established two co-operative concerns, one called the Commercial Company, for weaving, and the other called the Cotton League Company, for both weaving and spinning; neither of which undertakings, unfortunately, met with the success that has attended similar establishments at Rochdale. No such concerns can possibly succeed, unless the functions of managers and operatives are kept distinct, and shareholders working as operatives are prepared to submit to a manager who is their own servant. This difficulty the Rochdale men have overcome; but in Padiham it led, combined probably with other causes, to the total failure of both the co-operative mills, one of them winding up with a heavy debt, which had to be liquidated by the shareholders.

The successful working of these concerns would, probably, have introduced a better feeling between capitalists and labourers, by bringing the men into practical acquaintance with some of the risks and difficulties attendant upon capital, and with the smallness of the margin which sometimes represents profit; but their cotton failure, and the circumstance that, on the sale of the mill which belonged to one of them, it was bought up by a person who had recently been the manager for the shareholders, had precisely the contrary effect, namely, that of embittering the feelings of the men. Shortly before the Padiham strike, a large trade society had been formed by the weavers in the district, called "The East Lancashire Amalgamated Power-loom Weavers' Association." The following are the most important matters contained in the printed rules of this society:—

"PREFACE.

"It is unnecessary to expatiate on the general usefulness of operatives being united, as the means of preventing reductions in wages; that it is of the greatest utility is proved by the fact that those trades which are the best paid are those which have been the longest and most efficiently protected by a union of the operatives engaged in them.

"The inefficiency of the methods, or rather want of method, here-

tofore resorted to by power-loom weavers, for the protection and maintenance of their interests, and the improvement of their condition, has long been a matter of deep regret, and has at length called into existence a wide-spread desire for some more systematic plan by which the earnings of weavers, &c., may be rendered more secure.

"No doubt experience will point out many improvements. They are presented merely as a germ from which may spring a vigorous plant, which being fostered by the genial showers of a united effort, and enlivened by the bright sunshine of intelligence, will send forth its gigantic branches, under whose shadow the sons of the loom may repose in security.

"OBJECTS.

"The objects of this association shall be *to keep up our present rate of wages to the standard list*, and to be able to resist any attempts to reduce the same, and also to prevent one employer paying less than another, for the same amount and quality of work, and more particularly to bring up the prices of those who are paying the lowest rate of wages; also the redressing of any grievances between employer and the employed. It shall also be the object of this association to cultivate amongst its members that fellow-feeling of social brotherhood which ever tends to alleviate human woes, and soothe the hard lot of the labourer; and also to render assistance to the relatives of deceased members of this society, to the best of its ability.

"RULES.

"1. This society shall be called 'The East Lancashire Amalgamated Power-loom Weavers' Friendly Society, and their dependents.'

"2. That this society be governed by a central executive committee, consisting of one representative from every 700 members, and two, if more.

"8. The central executive committee shall direct and control the general proceedings of this society for and in the name of this society. It shall have the power to make new laws, or amend old ones; but one month's notice shall be given to all the district committees of any important alteration of old laws, or introduction of new ones. It shall receive all applications from the district committees for advice or assistance, and shall act thereon as it may deem fit. It shall have the power to object to or approve of strikes, when other means to settle disputed matters fail, and no strike shall be considered legal or worthy of support, unless it be approved of by the central executive committee. It shall fix the amount of contributions to be paid by the members of this society for the support of any strike that may have been sanctioned by the central executive committee; but at no time shall the contributions be less than one penny per week. It shall, by mediation, arbitration, and legal proceedings, protect the interests and promote the wellbeing of this society in all cases of dispute and

difficulties; and generally, it shall take the most efficient means in its power to promote the objects of this society.

"19. That the weekly subscriptions be one penny per member, and each member's house be supplied with a card, on which the collector must enter members' names, with date of entrance, and all contributions before leaving the house."

20. Directs the collectors to hand over their collections every week.

21. Requires collectors to find security.

22. Provides that collectors shall be paid not more than 2*s.* 6*d.*, or less than 2*s.* 1*d.*, in the pound.

23. Provides that no member shall be admitted except he be in good health, and at work at the time.

24. Provides for payment of £3 funeral money to relatives of deceased members.

"DISPUTES.

"28. If the members of this society in any mill, shop, or place, should have a reduction of prices offered them, or should the imposition of any rule or regulation be attempted that is calculated to curtail the earnings of those members, or render their situations unnecessarily uncomfortable; or should the prices of any mill, shop, or place be already so low as to justify an advance, the members of such mill, shop, or place shall make a full statement in writing of their grievances, to be called a "Bill of Grievances," and they shall in the first place lay such bill of grievances before the district committee, who shall, after proper investigation, proceed to take such steps as shall, if possible, amicably arrange the matter of dispute between the employer and employed. *But if, after having tried every means to amicably arrange any dispute that shall have been called into existence as aforementioned, it shall be found impossible to do so* WITHOUT ENCROACHING ON THE WAGES OR PRIVILEGES OF THE MEMBERS, then the district committee shall direct its secretary to write a copy of the bill of grievances, and send it to the general secretary, who, immediately on receiving the same, shall forward a copy to the committee of every other district, with summons, calling a meeting of the central executive committee; such meeting shall take place within nine days from the receipt of the same by the general secretary, if possible.

"29. That no case of dispute shall be entertained by the central executive committee, unless it has been previously investigated by the district committee, and a copy duly forwarded to the general secretary, who shall forward copies of the same to each district committee in this association.

"30. Should the central executive committee (after full and careful investigation into any bill of grievances) resolve that the members for which such bill emanates shall strike, the said members shall be authorized to give a legal notice to their employer that they intend to leave his employ, and if satisfactory arrangements be not come to before the expiration of such notice, the said members shall leave their work, and be entitled to support from this association.

"31. Whenever any strike shall have received the sanction of the central executive committee, each district in the association shall pay towards the support of such strike, in proportion to the number of paying members in the district, and the number of individuals on strike. And the sum due from each district, for the support of such strike, shall be transmitted through some safe medium to the committee of the district in which the strike may exist, at least two days before the day on which the parties on strike receive their pay.

"32. That when any member of this association apply to the general secretary *for the rate of wages per standard list*, he must communicate with his or her employer on the subject; and should any member or members think that they have been unjustly discharged or unlawfully dealt with by their employers, the case must be brought before the district committee, according to the 28th rule, and strictly investigated before any legal proceedings be taken; any member or members acting contrary to these rules must bear the responsibility on themselves."

During the depression of the cotton trade that preceded its recent prosperity, two firms in the town had made a reduction in their prices for weaving. The hands did not willingly submit to this reduction, which was not made by the other masters at that time. This led to dissatisfaction on the part of the hands of the two firms in question, and they had meetings on the subject. When the reduction took place the masters, it is alleged, told the hands that the amount taken off should be put on again when trade revived. When, however, the revival of trade took place, instead of putting on the full amount taken off they only offered one-half. This increased the dissatisfaction, and led to a large number of the workpeople joining the East Lancashire Weavers' Association, with a view of getting the wages of the district raised up to the Blackburn standard list. At this time the wages of the whole of the Padiham masters, whose men subsequently struck, were decidedly below the Blackburn rates. They were thought by the masters themselves to be 12½ per cent. below, though it ultimately turned out, as will be seen, that the real difference was not so great Some negotiation took place between the operatives and their employers, in which the secretary of the Union also took part, with a view of getting the wages raised to the Blackburn standard, but without success, and ultimately the operatives served the masters with notices to leave their employment, and sent in lists of the prices they required.

The employers called a meeting at the Assembly Room, on the first Monday after the notices were served, and a request was made to all the operatives to attend.

Several of the masters spoke at this meeting, but the operatives objected to hear one or two of them, on account of the strong feeling which existed against them, through their connexion with the co-operative establishments before referred to. The masters had come to this meeting with the intention of offering within 2½

per cent. of the Blackburn standard list prices, being a rise of ten per cent. on their previous prices. The allowance of 2½ per cent. they claimed to cover what they considered the local disadvantages of Padiham, as compared with Blackburn. On account of the uproarious character of the meeting, arising from the before-mentioned causes, this proposition was not actually on that occasion, but it was afterwards, handed to the reporter, and appeared in the *Blackburn Weekly Times* of the Saturday following. The prices offered by each master were also, I believe, posted up in his own mill.

The cotton manufacture was at this time (March, 1859) as is well known, in a highly prosperous condition, and the Padiham masters were naturally anxious that their promising prospects of trade should not be interfered with by a strike, and I am informed by a manufacturer in the neighbourhood, that he considered the prices offered at Padiham, for the purpose of avoiding the strike, higher than the masters could properly afford to pay.

The prices offered did not expressly refer to the Blackburn standard list, but were specific prices based on the particular looms of the employer, and the description of work he was doing. For example, I find the following put forth as a copy of the offer posted in the mill of a gentleman whose hands remained in during the strike:

Loom.	Width of cloth.	Length.	Reed.	Wheel.	Price.
40in.	39in.	37½	51	41	9

The other conditions necessary to determine whether the prices so offered were in accordance with the Blackburn list, would be settled by the construction of the particular looms with reference to which the offer was made, and it would therefore need further calculations, based upon an examination of the looms, to determine that point.

The prices offered were, however, as before stated, not in the first instance professed to be equal to the Blackburn Standard List, but were brought forward as being 2½ per cent. under it on account of local disadvantages.

The proper measure of these local disadvantages, if any, I am unable to decide, as I find very different opinions expressed by persons equally likely to be well informed on the subject. The only point on which I find agreement, is that Padiham is under some disadvantage owing to the higher rates of railway carriage from and to Liverpool and Manchester, Blackburn paying about 10*s.* and 8*s.* 2*d.* a ton, against 12*s.* 6*d.* and 9*s.* 2*d.* paid at Padiham.

In other particulars Padiham would, I conceive, have the advantage, namely cheapness of land, and better supply and greater cheapness of water. Which preponderates I am unable to determine on the whole. When we see so many mills erected, and in the course of erection, at a distance from the centres of population and from the markets for raw and manufactured produce, we can only conclude that it must be because in practice the advantages and disadvantages of such localities are, to say the least, pretty nearly balanced. If it

were not so, we should have seen the new mills all crowded in the immediate vicinity of Manchester. Probably, however, one of the advantages which manufacturers propose to themselves when they resort to the remoter parts of the manufacturing districts, is cheapness of labour, which no doubt they would, at first at least, find to be the case, as a new mill absorbs the rural population of the adjoining district, to whom even what to a manufacturing population appears to be a low rate of wages, is a great improvement on anything they could earn by other occupations. And supposing the view of the manufacturers to be correct, that putting wages out of sight, the balance of other advantages and disadvantages is against places situated like Padiham, there would be no hardship to the operative in reducing his wages, to some extent, to meet it, for the expense of living to an operative must be greater in a town like Blackburn, than in a country place like Padiham; wherefore, lower wages would go as far.

There are also at present, I am given to understand, practical differences between Padiham and Blackburn owing to the difference of the materials used, most of the Blackburn weavers using warps spun by the mule, whilst at Padiham throstle warps are employed. The mule warps are cheaper for the masters by about one or one and a half per pound, but are worse for the men, as they are not so strong as throstle warps, and there are therefore more broken threads, and consequently more stoppages of the machinery; so that if working by the same list of prices, a Blackburn man would have to work harder for the same money than a Padiham man.

This question, however, of local disadvantages is of not very great moment in the Padiham strike; but I understand that it is the main question at issue in a strike now in progress at the neighbouring town of Colne.

At Padiham, however, at a later period of the strike, it was contended by the employers that the prices originally offered, as being 2½ per cent. below the Blackburn list, were in fact fully equal to the Blackburn prices, and upon this question, and not upon the propriety of the allowance of 2½ per cent., the decision of the dispute ultimately turned. There seems good reason to think that if the Padiham masters had more promptly met the demand of their hands for a rise in wages, by making the offer they afterwards made, before the notices had been given by the operatives, their offer would have been accepted, and there would have been no strike. But when the offer came, the operatives having found they could not get an advance at all, without the threat of a struggle, had put themselves in the hands of the Union, and made their arrangements to stand a strike. There was therefore not only no disposition to regard favourably so tardy a concession, obviously merely wrung from the masters by threat of a strike, but the operatives were not unnaturally disposed to leave themselves in the hands of the managers of an association, which, by standing by them in their difficulty, had already enabled them to get so important a concession. The masters, by their unwise and

illiberal conduct, had thrown their men into the arms of the Association.

If the managers of the Union had been satisfied with this substantial victory, and had compared the value of the amount in dispute, or supposed to be in dispute (about 3*d.* to 6*d.* a week in a weaver's wages), with the heavy loss and other evils attendant upon a protracted strike, it would have been well. But the principle on which they act appears to be (see 32nd rule) to assimilate all wages in the East Lancashire district to the Blackburn standard List, and upon this they acted, requiring to be satisfied that the prices offered were equal to the Blackburn list. In order to determine this question, it was of course necessary to examine the looms. This state of things introduced a new feature into the dispute, namely, the appearance of the Union, as it were, as a principal in the matter; and inasmuch as the difference depended upon points which could only be determined by inspection of the looms, it *practically* involved a claim that the committee or secretary of the Union, or some one appointed by them, should have the liberty of entering the mills and examining the looms. This position of affairs was the great stumbling-block in the way of the settlement of a really very trifling dispute. The men would not settle except through the Union, and the masters would not deal with the Union, or permit its secretary to enter their mills to examine the machinery.

The masters alleged that two of the points in difference were, *to establish the right of the paid secretary of the Union to enter their mills at his pleasure*, and to annul the right of master and man to arrange any dispute, substituting the secretary as the only medium of communication. Mr. Pinder, the secretary of the Union, in a letter, which will be afterwards quoted (see page 459), denies the first of these allegations, but takes no notice of the second. The allegation that a claim was made that the secretary should have *a general right to enter any mill at his pleasure*, is not borne out by facts but in this particular instance no doubt the claim to enter the mills to measure the beams was practically made, for I not only gather that fact from impartial testimony, but find it confirmed by Mr. Pinder himself, in a placard dated the 24th of March, and purporting to be signed by him on behalf of the Power-loom Weavers' Association, in which he says,

"It is true I have waited upon masters at different times previous to the strike, and requested them, on behalf of the hands, to pay according to the Blackburn standard list of prices, *and also to allow an inspection of the looms, in order that we might arrive at a correct report of the real difference in point of price*, and to give satisfaction to all parties. These requests they positively refused to concede, hence the present strike."

I do not find, except in one case, any strong efforts made at this time by either party, to get rid of the difficulty they had got into by eluding it, as for instance, by suggesting that the looms should be measured by some third party. That such an effort might have suc-

ceeded, without any sacrifice of principle, is proved by its success in the case before alluded to, which will be more fully noticed hereafter.

The reason of this probably was that the masters did not then believe they were offering the Blackburn List prices, nor profess to do so.

Under these circumstances the strike commenced; the men would only approach their masters through the Union and its secretary the principle of the Union was to obtain the standard list and nothing less. A claim of the standard list involved an inspection of the machinery: the masters on their side abided by their own list, and declined to treat with the secretary, or to allow him to examine their looms; and the weavers consequently acted on their notices; and the hands of six mills went out on the 17th of March, 1859.

The number of hands thus throwing themselves out of employment appears, by the balance-sheets issued by the Union, showing the numbers they were paying, to have been about 870 weavers, 6 overlookers, 61 tenters or assistants, and 6 warehouse boys. The numbers returned as supported by the Union vary slightly from week to week, and the above are the largest numbers I find under each class. It seems at first surprising that the weavers should have thus thrown themselves out of employment for so trifling a dispute, and it would be so, if they were all persons of mature age, but the majority of them are youths and girls from fourteen or fifteen years of age upwards, the age when they are most open to hasty impressions, and least ready to listen to the teachings of experience. The superintending a power-loom is an easy business, and a youth or girl of fifteen is equal to superintending three looms, and could earn from 15*s.* to 17*s.* a week, whilst a grown-up man could not undertake more than four, on which he would need an assistant called a tenter, and his net wages, after paying his tenter, would be about £1 a week. When on strike the weavers were allowed by the Union, at first 6*s.* a week, which was afterwards raised to 7*s.*; the overlookers the same; the warehouse boys, at first 4*s.*, afterwards 5*s.*; the tenters, at first 3*s.*, afterwards 3*s.* 6*d.*

If the Padiham masters had been unsupported, the Union would have been much too strong for them, and they must have succumbed at once; but they stated the circumstances of the dispute to the masters of the neighbouring district, and applied to them for support, which was granted, *on the express ground that the dispute was not a mere question of wages, but one of dictation.* This led to the formation of a Masters' Defence Association, by whom the Padiham masters were supported throughout the strike, the allowance being at the rate of 2*s.* 6*d.* per loom per week. The total amount so contributed during the strike was between £6000 and £7000. The following circular of the Masters' Association, though dated a little after the time I am now speaking of, will best explain the aspect in which the Padiham strike now appeared to the employers of labour in the neighbourhood :—

"To the Master Spinners and Manufacturers of the County of Lancaster.

"GENTLEMEN,—In the opinion of many spinners and manufacturers, it is considered desirable that a greater unanimity should exist amongst the masters, and that it is imperative some determined effort should now be made to check the schemes and intentions of the amalgamated societies of the operatives. The extent to which these combinations have arrived, is, perhaps, not generally known; but it is impossible for anyone to be acquainted with the perfection in which they exist, and the immense power with which their demands can be supported, without feeling considerable alarm at the prospect of the conditions under which the trade must be carried on if these societies are permitted to continue in active operation. The great difficulty in inducing the masters to combine, has originated partly from a feeling that combination means an interference with that law which alone regulates the rate of wages, viz., 'Supply and Demand,' and partly from an apathetic feeling that because they individually are not immediately attacked, they are in no danger. This, coupled with the very reverse feeling on the part of the operatives, who are ever ready to combine to enforce an illegitimate advance of wages, clearly accounts for the force with which their demands are supported, and also for the utter want of union or community of feeling amongst the masters.

"We are perfectly satisfied that any effort, however powerfully supported it might be, to regulate the rate of wages, or to establish any uniform rate or standard, would prove fruitless, if not absolutely injurious to the masters themselves. We believe that this question must be left to each master and each operative for arrangement, and that the state of the labour market, coupled with the further circumstances of locality, quality of machinery and materials, and the capabilities of the operative, will, and indeed ought to settle the amount. With these views we need hardly state that the Association of Masters which is now proposed to be established, will not deal with, or have power to entertain any question of wages; but will endeavour solely to counteract the combinations and actions of the Operatives' Associations, by affording pecuniary assistance to every master whose hands may leave him at the suggestion of any society, or be supported by such society. In justification of this proposition, we will detail the position in which the cotton trade of East Lancashire now stands.

"Within the last twelve months there has been established a society called 'The East Lancashire Amalgamated Power-Loom Weavers' Association,' numbering about 12,000 members, resident in the various towns and districts in the eastern portions of the county. The head or executive committee holds council at Bolton, and is assisted by a permanently engaged and paid secretary, and by other executive or local committees. Its objects (openly avowed) are:—

"First,—Irrespective of any difference in the quality of machinery, materials, or labour, and without reference to the disadvantages of locality, or the cost of production, to enforce the payment of one uniform rate of wages, or, as they term it, 'The Standard List.'

"Secondly,—To establish the right of their paid secretary for the time being, to enter any mill at his pleasure, and to examine the machinery; and

"Thirdly,—To annul the right of master and man to settle and arrange any dispute or misunderstanding that may arise, substituting a Mr. Pinder (their present paid secretary) as the only medium of communication between the employer and employed.

"To carry these objects into effect, Padiham is the first place selected for the operations of this newly organized association, and other towns are to follow.

"Accordingly, a portion of the Padiham operatives, at the dictation of this executive and paid secretary, made demands on their masters in entire accord with the three foregoing objects of their association: viz., First,—A rate of wages equal to the Standard List; Secondly,—The right of this Mr. Pinder to enter all mills, measure emery beams, and count wheels, with the further right to order such alterations as he might deem necessary; and Thirdly,—A meeting between the masters and Mr. Pinder, to arrange the amount to be paid on each kind of cloth.

"The masters indignantly refused to submit to such humiliating conditions; they positively refused to recognise Mr. Pinder; but expressed their willingness to meet their own hands and arrange the amount of the advance. Each master offered an advance, in some cases more than the Standard List, in others equal to it, and in none more than a farthing per piece below it. Yet because they refused to recognise Mr. Pinder or the Association, the hands struck work on the 17th of March last, and, with few exceptions, now remain out on strike. It will, therefore, be seen that the question in dispute is not a question of wages but of dictation. The only body of hands who have gone in are Messrs. H—— and I——'s, and they have resumed work at the prices offered before the strike.

"To support the strike, contributions are levied on the operatives of various towns in East Lancashire, and the following list furnishes the names of those towns and the amounts received from them in aid of the strike:—

"23RD MAY, 1859.

"Blackburn	£76	5	7
Darwen	40	0	0
Preston	37	0	0
Accrington	34	0	0½
Church	30	0	0
Padiham and Sabden	28	1	10½
Harwood	25	0	0¼
Clitheroe	25	0	0
Bolton	14	0	0

"Enfield	£13	0	0
Chorley	9	10	0
Burnley	9	0	0
Leigh	7	7	0
Tyldesley	1	17	0
Barrowford	4	0	0
Haslingden	3	3	9
Ramsbottom	3	1	0
Colne	2	15	11½
"Cash in hand	62	7	9⅞

" Thus giving a total income of £425 9 0⅞ *for one week.*

"And we may add that these contributions are increasing in amount.

"In order to enable the masters to resist the dictation of this society, or any other society of operatives, it is now proposed to establish an Association of Masters to be called 'The Lancashire Master Spinners and Manufacturers' Defence Society;' the object of which shall be to afford pecuniary assistance to any member who may be assailed by the above, or any other society of operatives. Already the following towns have agreed to support the Padiham masters:—Burnley, Preston, Clitheroe, Harwood, Colne, Sabden, and Marsden; and we trust that the masters in your town are willing to unite and make common cause for the protection of the trade under the above circumstances.

" We are, yours obediently,
" Sutcliffe and Handsley,
" *Secretaries on behalf of the Burnley Association.*
" Burnley, *4th June*, 1859."

I also insert, at some risk of repetition, the following letter emanating from the same Association, which appeared in the *Times*, at a still later date, for the sake of introducing the reply to it, put forth by the Weavers' Association:—

" *To the Editor of the Times.*

" Sir,—If it will afford consolation to Messrs. Trollope and Son, we can assure them they are not by any means peculiar in their present position with their hands.

" The cotton manufacturers of the village of Padiham, about three miles from Burnley, have withstood the strike of their weavers, members of the East Lancashire Weavers' Association, for twenty-one weeks; and at the present moment there is no more appearance of a settlement than within a week of its commencement, and upwards of 2000 looms are still standing.

" The attitude assumed, and the claims made by these organized unions of operatives, are of such a character as to require the most serious attention of the public; for, while former strikes in

this district have been restricted to the question of wages, the operatives through these unions now seek to impose on the masters terms as to the management of their mills and trade of the most tyrannical character; and it is really becoming a question whether the important trade of this district can be carried on.

"As this subject is now engrossing much attention, perhaps you would kindly permit us to explain the state of things existing here, unparalleled, we venture to say, on any former occasion.

"The above Association, but recently established, now numbers more than 22,000 members, all of whom contribute to one common fund. It has its head executive, and also its local executives, and a permanently engaged and paid secretary, and by unity of action and the concentration of its power on individuals, seeks to crush by brute force the capital and intelligence of East Lancashire.

"The objects of the association, as openly avowed by its paid advocates, are :—

"1. Irrespective of any difference in the quality of machinery, materials, or labour, and without reference to the disadvantages of locality, or the cost of production, to enforce the payment throughout East Lancashire of one uniform rate of wage, or, as they term it, 'The Standard List.'

"2. To establish the right of their secretary to enter any mill at his pleasure, to examine the machinery; and

"3. To annul the right of master and man to settle or arrange any dispute, substituting the secretary as the only medium of communication, and who shall have the power to determine whether the hands remain at work or strike.

"To carry these objects into effect, it was arranged to attack the Padiham masters first, as they were thought the weakest, and accordingly a number of the unionists made claims in accordance with the foregoing objects. The masters, to avoid the evils invariably attendant on strikes, offered advances, in some cases more than the list, in others slightly under, the average being barely one farthing per piece below, and involving at the utmost 2*d.* to 3*d.* out of a wage of 16*s.* to 18*s.* a week; they, however, steadfastly refused to recognise either the Union or its secretary, and on this account the hands struck work on the 17th of March last, the willing strikers forcing the unwilling to do the same.

"The full machinery of the Union was then put in operation, and forced contributions have since, from week to week, been levied on the operatives in adjacent towns, to the extent of about £400 a week; this sum is nearly all absorbed by the payment of 7*s.* a week to each weaver—of some £25 among 116 distressed families, while the collectors, paid advocates, and executives appropriate to themselves nearly £50 a week.

"If any persons, no matter how substantial the reason, refuse to pay the levy, they are denounced in opprobrious terms in the printed balance-sheet. If a shopkeeper declines to contribute, exclusive dealing is resorted to. If a newspaper ventures to hint at the rash-

ness of the leaders of this strike, the paper is at once condemned, and the people told not to read it. If a hand starving on 7*s.* a week ventures to return to work, he is surrounded by a dense mob, and forced to remain idle. If any doubt the honesty of the executive, and claim to have it shown how the £5000 to £6000 they have received has been expended, they are denounced as tools of the master; and the public mind, now vitiated and demoralized, is daily fed by these paid advocates (some of them men of worthless character) with the most gross and wicked falsehoods.

"Against this united attack, the Padiham masters could not have made head; they must have succumbed; but fortunately the masters of other towns, seeing the danger was common to all, came to their assistance, and are determined to stand by them until the danger is past.

"It is evident to all who are watching the leaders of this strike, that their efforts are being directed more to the subjugation of the master than to an advance of wages for the hands; they know that the latter will speedily follow the former; and the masters are now, notwithstanding the many jealousies existing among them, becoming alive to the necessity of a general combination for the purposes of defence.

"This strike is only in its infancy; we shall see it spread gradually, but surely, throughout the whole of this county, and a struggle of a fearful character between capital and labour is imminent, unless the trade here, following the example set them in London, will unite and say,—'Trades' unions, whether among spinners or weavers, for an illegitimate interference with the value of labour and the management of trade, shall not exist, and until they are abandoned we will close our works.'

"We are, Sir, your obedient servants,

"THE COMMITTEE OF THE LANCASHIRE MASTER SPINNERS AND MANUFACTURERS' DEFENCE SOCIETY.

"BURNLEY, *August* 8."

To this letter the following reply appeared:—

"*To the Editor of the Times.*

"SIR,—A letter having appeared in the *Times* on the Padiham strike, which has emanated from the Committee of the Master Spinners and Manufacturers' Defence Society, I feel myself called upon to give a true history of the details of the present strike, of its origin and cause, and the real position it now holds. Previous to doing this, I will just take a glance at a few remarks made by the writer of the said article, which may tend to show to the public the objects the writer had in view.

"It is said that the present strike is 'not one of wages, but of dictation; that the operatives seek to impose on the masters terms as to the management of their mills and trade of the most tyrannical character; also to establish the right of their paid secretary to enter

any mill at his pleasure, to examine machinery, and say what shall be done by the master and hands in his employ.' These and other assertions are made, which, if not corrected, must have a tendency to lead the public mind astray. The remarks which I am about to make shall be grounded upon facts, and God forbid that I should in the least even attempt to exaggerate or misconstrue one single fact, either for the operatives or against them.

"Previous to any dissatisfaction among the weavers which led to this strike, they were not joined with any trades' union, they had no dealings, part, or lot, with any paid secretary. The whole of the masters were paying nearly one uniform rate of wages. At that time, Messrs. —— and Brothers (*the oldest established firm in the town*) *made a reduction of* 1*d. per cut*, which in some instances was more than 10 per cent. A few weeks after, another firm followed the example. The other masters then began to express that they would be compelled to do the same, or they could not compete with them in the same market. It was then that the operatives of these two mills put their heads together to devise some plan to arrest the progress of this serious evil. At that time the Weavers' Association was in existence, but not under the same name nor to the same extent as at present. It was this reduction that caused the operatives of Padiham to form a Union. They got up meetings, and got some from each mill to form a committee, who agreed to agitate the town, and induce the operatives of Padiham to join themselves as a branch of the Weavers' Association. With this plan they succeeded, and nearly all the weavers, &c., in the town became members of the Union. The operatives then waited upon their employers, time after time, and requested them not to carry out this reduction. Failing in this, they then solicited them to reduce only one halfpenny instead of a penny per cut, but this request the employers sternly refused to listen to. The committee of the Amalgamated Weavers' Association then interfered, and kindly solicited the employers to comply with the request of their workpeople, and thus avoid the evils of a strike. But all was of no avail, and the members of the Union at once declared that as Padiham prices generally were far below the standard list of Blackburn, Accrington, Darwen, and surrounding towns, a general appeal should be made to the masters by the general secretary of the Association, and request them to pay according to the said list. This was done, and the result was that at some of the mills he was threatened to be thrown into the river; at others they said they would sooner break up their looms for old iron than give one farthing of an advance.

"Had the masters at that time been desirous of amicably settling the grievance, it might have been done without so much quibbling; but, alas! they were stupid, and at a meeting of their own determined not to comply with the reasonable request of their operatives, believing at the time that the Union was too weak to support them in case of a strike. Again the employers were waited upon, and all

peaceable means tried that could possibly be imagined, but proved fruitless. The operatives were then ordered to tender in their notices to their respective employers, who met them with scorn and contempt, until within three days of their expiration. Then they began to see the folly of their conduct, and that a strike would evidently be the result. They then agreed to give an advance, and pay one uniform rate of wages—viz., 2½ per cent. below the standard list, and called a meeting of the operatives in the Assembly Room, Padiham, and made known their intentions, as you will find from the *Blackburn Weekly Times* for March the 19th. This offer the operatives rejected, and why? Because they were irritated by the indignant and contemptible treatment they had previously received. On former occasions, when they had no Union to protect them, they would have gladly accepted such an offer, but now they were connected with the Union, and its members had promised their support until they obtained the list prices. Under these circumstances, they struck work, and have now been out twenty-one weeks, and the masters are still holding out the same offer as they made at first. They say they have not altered their position. How, then, can they have the audacity to assert that this strike does not involve a question of wages, but one of dictation? There is no dictation connected with it. Let them give the standard list prices, and the strike is at an end. They say 'The operatives seek to enforce a claim that their paid secretary shall enter any mill he chooses, and shall dictate to the masters what shall be done and what must not be done,' and 'the operatives have not the power to settle.' I emphatically declare these statements to be false. I do not want to enter their mills, and will not go near them, unless requested by the masters. We did not attack the Padiham masters because they were thought the weakest, but because of their uncalled-for reduction and their low prices. It was this that awakened the operatives of Padiham to a sense of their duty and their interests, and caused them to unite in one strong body to resist the imposing and unprincipled hand of their employers.

"In conclusion, I say, our claims are no more than the Blackburn standard prices, as paid in the surrounding towns. Let these prices be given, and the strike is ended, and Padiham's sons and daughters of toil will again be thriving and prosperous. Hoping that this is not far distant,

"I am, Sir, yours respectfully,

"ABRAHAM PINDER,

"*Secretary to the East Lancashire Association.*

"DARWEN, *August* 14."

The Padiham dispute, though really depending upon the simple matter I have stated, was somewhat complicated by the introduction of other grievances. One of these was the irregularity of the emery beams, owing to their being worn; one of the demands of the men when out on strike being that the emery beams should all be

adjusted to one size before they would return to their work. In reply to this, the masters offered to have them rectified by degrees—a few at a time—but that would not satisfy the operatives.

Another grievance was the practice of making the weavers pay for what is called gold bobbin, which is used for heading the pieces of cloth. In order to ensure that this expensive material is not wasted, it is the practice of the employer, in other places as well as in Padiham, to make the weaver pay for it, but to allow him so much per piece extra in return. A gold bobbin costs 3½*d.*, and if fairly used would head seven pieces of cloth, and the allowance of a halfpenny extra was made for the cloth so headed. This was, however, considered a piece of tyranny; and I find, at a meeting of weavers at Accrington, held in support of the strike, on the 30th of March, that the proposal was put, at the instance of a weaver, that the gold bobbin question should not be considered a part of the dispute, but was negatived by a large majority.* I find in another place the accusation that the weavers were forced to pay for the gold bobbin *in advance*, which was certainly unnecessary; but the masters, or those of them who followed such a practice, appear to have offered to make an alteration in that respect.

It would occupy too much space, and would throw little additional light on the subject, to attempt to recount all the incidents that occurred during the six months' duration of the strike. There were none that made any material change in the position of the contending parties.

The weavers continued to be supported by the Union, who had at their disposal funds rather on the increase than otherwise; the collection the week before the conclusion of the strike being the largest weekly collection during the whole period.

The town of Padiham was plentifully posted with placards emanating from the contending parties, and the newspapers circulated in the manufacturing districts contained weekly columns devoted to accounts of the meetings of delegates, and a weekly statement of receipts and expenses, called a *balance-sheet*, was published by the executive committee.

A great number of the handbills, and much of the discussion in the newspapers and at meetings, turned upon the circumstance, that one of the employers, Mr. H——, who was originally a party to the dispute, had settled with his men, who had accepted his list of prices. It does not appear that Mr. H——, any more than the other employers, submitted to have his machinery inspected by the secretary of the Union; but his looms were measured by his own hands, and the measurements taken to the secretary of the weavers, who found them equal to the Blackburn standard list. I am informed that much of the doubt that rested on the result of the comparison of the prices offered by the Padiham masters with those in the Blackburn list, arose from the looms used in Padiham

* See *Blackburn Weekly Times*, April 2, 1859.

being of intermediate sizes, which, according to the directions appended to the Blackburn list, entitled them to an allowance, and that Mr. H——, or some person in his employment, was acute enough to see and avail himself of this advantage, which the other masters were not. I am inclined to attach some weight to this explanation, from the circumstance that otherwise it is impossible to account for the prices offered by the masters, as being 2½ per cent. below the list, being ultimately found to be substantially equal to it. It certainly appears very strange that the employers should be themselves unable to calculate their own prices with reference to the standard list, but such certainly seems to have been the case.

In a placard put forth by the operatives' association, dated the 17th of March, I find this statement with reference to Mr. H——'s hands :—

. . . "We beg to say, in justice to ourselves and the public generally, that the dispute on the wages question between Mr. H—— and his hands has been amicably settled between themselves, to the satisfaction of all concerned ; and if any master or masters are prepared to make the same offer as he has done, *namely, to pay equal to the Blackburn standard list, and to adjust their emery beams to one certain point*, they have the same privilege, with this understanding, that as there are certain grievances, which they consider as such to be unjust, namely, being compelled to pay for picking the healds, having to pay for gold bobbins, and other things which are best known between the hands and the masters themselves ; and if the masters are prepared to adjust these differences to the satisfaction of their hands, they are quite at liberty to do so with their own hands at the earliest opportunity.

"I remain yours,

"On behalf of the Padiham Weavers' Association,

"Abraham Pinder."

In reply to this, the employers stated in another placard :—

"We beg to say that we all agreed to pay one price, Mr. H—— included, and posted notices in our respective mills to that effect on Tuesday last; all these prices were submitted to each other, the calculations being based on a given size of emery beam, in order that all might arrive at one uniform offer.

"By what process of reasoning the conclusion is arrived at that Mr. H——'s prices are equal to the Blackburn standard list, and ours are not, we are utterly at a loss to ascertain.

"Respecting the grievances spoken of in the placard, viz., picking healds and gold bobbins: this is the first time we have had any intimation that these were grievances. As to the picking of healds, this is no benefit to the master at all, but saves the weavers the trouble of picking them, and if they prefer doing the work themselves to paying some other person, they are at liberty to do so.

"With respect to the next grievance, it would appear from the

placard issued, that the operatives had to pay for the gold bobbins, without receiving an equivalent, but such is not the fact. When we make a cloth headed with gold, we pay the weavers as much extra per piece as it costs them in gold; indeed, in some instances, it is a saving to the operative, encourages habits of economy, removes much unpleasantness, and, on the whole, gives general satisfaction."

It is clear that, after these publications, the struggle could only have continued by both parties being to blame. What Mr. H—— could do without sacrifice of dignity or independence, the other employers might have done too, if they had been actuated by the same spirit of conciliation; and on the other hand, if the managers of the Union had had any sincere desire to terminate the struggle, they could not fail to have been put upon inquiries, the result of which would have been the same as those instituted by other parties six months afterwards, namely, to show that the prices offered were substantially equal to the Blackburn list.

It is true, as I am informed, that the masters did, at a later period, offer to allow their beams to be measured by a disinterested third party, but *now* would have been the time to have made that offer before the breach was widened; and the operatives, on their side, might have made a similar suggestion; or if there were none among the hands of each mill who were competent to the task, they might have suggested that they should be allowed to take assistants; but unfortunately, it took six months to bring both parties to this simple common-sense expedient for getting out of the difficulty they had got into. Doubtless, some part of this is to be explained by the want of a personal good understanding between the masters and their hands, a particular in which Mr. H—— had, doubtless, some advantage over his neighbours.

Similar views to those I have just expressed were, apparently, held by persons in Padiham whose position enabled them to see, and whose good sense induced them to deplore, what was going on; which led to five respectable tradesmen in the town forming themselves into a committee of conciliation. Two of these gentlemen I have been in personal communication with, and can testify to their having the qualifications of a technical knowledge, good judgment, and disinterestedness, to fit them for dealing satisfactorily with the dispute, if the parties in difference had been wise enough to accept of their mediation.

One of these gentlemen has furnished me with the following statement of what was done by this committee:—

"We visited one firm, measured the beams, counted the wheels, and wrought out some of the sorts; and taking the emery beams at the measurement as we found them, the prices came out very nearly;

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* I presume this refers to the committee and secretary of the Padiham district.

but the reason we could not effect a settlement, was, we found that the committee and secretary of the operatives* could do nothing but what was sanctioned by the executive, and urged as a reason that the operatives on strike were receiving 7*s*. per week each on the understanding that they would adhere to the decision of the executive; and on the other hand, the masters were bound by the rules of their association to make arrangements with neither the executive, the committee, nor any intermediate party, but solely with their own hands. The committee found also that a great deal of jealousy existed, both on the part of the operatives and the masters, and that the mediation committee were watched very narrowly, afraid of any leaning towards the one side more than the other. From these circumstances, the mediation committee could do no good, and gave up their task in despair."

From the other of these gentlemen I learn that when they called a meeting of the operatives lately working for the master whose looms they had measured, one of the operatives' committee, not belonging to that mill, entered the room, and called for a show of hands of those who were prepared "*to support the executive*," when all the hands were held up; and he then called upon those who meant to support the Executive to follow him, and, leaving the room, was followed by the whole meeting. In this case, therefore, as the master had allowed his looms to be examined, the attempt at mediation seems to have failed from the fault of the operatives.

Another of the mediation committee, whom I have not personally seen, gives the history of an attempt to settle the strike at another of the mills, in a placard signed with his own name, for the failure of which the masters in question certainly seem to be responsible, as the following extract will show.

"I went to the executive to inquire into the matter, and I found, on questioning the first deputation in the presence of the executive, that the Grove masters had promised to make all their other looms equal to Graham's looms, and the hands were satisfied with the prices offered for the sorts woven on those looms, but that the masters would not make a settlement with any committee; so the executive said they did not care for that, if they would only give the prices,—that was all that was wanted; so they desired the Grove weavers to have a shop meeting, and send a deputation from themselves to see if they would give the price which the other deputation had said was offered. Now does this look like dictation to the masters?

"At a meeting of the Grove weavers at the Dun Horse Inn, on Monday forenoon, a deputation was elected from among themselves, and I stated to that meeting that another shopkeeper and myself had been to the Grove, to see if they could receive a deputation of their own hands, and make a settlement with them; and I told the weavers that the reason we had been before them was because we

had heard that two of the manufacturers had said that they could not receive a deputation nor make a settlement ; if they did, they would be breaking the bond, for they were all in one bond not to settle with any deputation, but to settle with their hands individually ; and one of the manufacturers said, that if the Grove masters broke the bond, he would send for Pinder on to his own premises, and settle with him at once. Now I think I can prove this statement.

"When Thomas H—— and myself went to the Grove masters they said they were willing to receive a deputation and hear what they had to say, but they should want time for consideration before they gave a decisive answer. I said they had better exchange notes with the weavers, so that both sides might be satisfied, but they made no reply. I told him that the hands were satisfied with the prices on Graham's looms, and the difference was with the other looms. The masters said the difference was with the emery beams, and they had got wheels to make them equal.

"During the meeting held at the Dun Horse, some of the committee came in, and the weavers ordered them out, that the masters could not say that the committee had anything to do with the meeting ; and four of their number were elected to go to the masters, and see if they were prepared to make their other looms equal to Graham's looms, and if they would give them a list of what they would pay for a list of what the hands wanted, but the masters refused to do either. So I understand from the deputation. Now does this look like dictation? Does it not look more like trying the patience of the hands? or else what was said about the bond was true."

The placard, after some exhortations to the masters, concludes by referring to the jealousy with which the mediation committee were regarded by the weavers' committee, and concludes thus :—

"And allow me further to say, that many of your own class think that the committee have been too indifferent about the termination of this strike, and that there ought to be another election of committeemen."

I have made inquiry from one of the gentlemen before referred to as my informants in this matter (he being a member of the Burnley Masters' Association), whether there was any such bond or other engagement by the Padiham masters as was referred to in this placard, and he has returned the following reply :—

"The allegation of a bond was utterly untrue, neither was there any *written* or *verbal* obligation of any kind existing beyond this :— The Burnley masters, whilst refusing to support the Padiham masters, or even to entertain a wage question, pledged themselves by *written resolutions* to support them against the *dictation* of the operatives' executive and the combination formed at Blackburn and other places.

"If the dispute had been confined to the Padiham masters on the one hand and their operatives on the other, we should never have

interfered; but when we read the demands of the executive, and were aware of the combination—a dozen towns—to crush the masters, we came forward in support.

"It is almost daily said, in connexion with the present strike at Colne, that the masters are united by bond, but this statement is equally untrue. At Colne as well as Padiham no restriction exists, and both sets of masters were at full liberty to make any contract they pleased with their hands, either by way of deputations or individually; any proposition restrictive of the fullest liberty on the part of the masters would have been scouted. The unanimity of the masters and their action arises solely from a sense of common danger."

The jealousy entertained by the operatives of the mediators, which is referred to in the foregoing placard, also peeps out at their public meetings.

At a meeting at Padiham, on the 29th of March, Mr. Maugham, one of the paid advocates of the weavers' association, is reported* to have said:—

"There had been that day a meeting of the hands connected with the mill of Messrs. H—— and I——. The hands had met through two parties, though not appointed by the masters—he distrusted the step, but hoped good would result. *These two parties were not members of their Association, therefore he considered it a doubt upon their honesty. If they were not for them they must be against them.* If these parties would pay to the Union, and become a part of them, they would have more confidence in their actions; respect might be shown them. And though their intentions might be pure, they were, as he said, not without suspicion. *These parties had not—neither in the Harwood struggle nor in the present—shown any disposition to aid them with their purse; and against such parties he must caution them.*"

I have stated that there were four weaving concerns in Padiham, whose hands remained at work during the struggle. The circumstances relating to one of them have been stated; two of the others were weaving fine goods, and were practically not affected by the dispute, and the fourth conceded the point in dispute, by allowing the secretary to measure his beams.

A few hands were also at work in each mill during the whole of the strike; these were chiefly families of overlookers, or persons having some relationship or connexion with the masters. The number of these persons might have been greater but for the interference of the operatives on strike, who, as is usually the case, did all they could to prevent others from accepting the wages which they had thought proper to refuse. The means resorted to for this object were—waiting for the obnoxious weaver at the outside of the mill, and then accompanying him home with a large crowd, hooting and occasionally, no doubt, hustling him. There was an assault charged against one of the men out, arising out of one of these cases; but

**Blackburn Weekly Times*, April 2nd, 1859.

on investigation before the magistrates, when the party charged *was defended at the expense of the Union*, the case was dismissed. After this occasion an extra force of police was put on, and no further disturbance of note occurred. There were also some attempts to exercise tyranny over the shopkeepers who declined to contribute to the support of the turn-outs, by resorting to exclusive dealing—collecting about the shop of the obnoxious tradesman, to warn operatives not to deal with him. This system of attempted coercion of those who declined to contribute to the support of the strike, was carried out more systematically in the weekly balance-sheets, where the collections from each mill and from the public were reported under the heads of the different manufacturing towns in the district. In these sheets there are repeatedly found such entries as the following :—

"John Webster, Dennis Haworth, and John Simpson, won't pay—shame !"

"Ashworth Cloggon says, 'You have come too soon'—shame!"

"Blackburn's shame on No. 100, 192, and 194."

These numbers are the numbers of the looms, which to those in the same mill is equivalent to giving the names.

"Padiham : George Hoyle's wife won't pay—shame !"

"Peel Hall, Preston : I am sorry to say that there is a man and his wife driving seven looms without a tenter, and will not pay. I hope Punch will visit them next week. No. 79 to 85."

"Shame on No. 108. Little Dumpy, a needleworker from London, won't pay ! No. 104."

"Shame on Shot family; Shot lives next door but one to the Factory Gate. That great hobbling lad on 196 won't pay—shame ! Nan o' Sutting Nan's won't pay—shame!"

"If Bill o' Pett's don't give over persuading weavers not to pay, Punch will deprive him of his top lip."

"Mother and daughter say they will not pay to Padiham hands; but if they don't, we certainly will give them a double drill."

The above are all quoted from two balance-sheets, the 2nd and 3rd, and are not all the instances of a similar kind in those two sheets.

Other remarks appear to threaten sure slander or abuse, in case of refusal to pay, as for instance,

"If that weaver in No. 25 does not pay up next week, Punch will say something about her that she will not like."

"If Martha Flitcroft, and one or two more, won't pay, Punch will tell something about them."

Others are of a more good humoured character, as:

"We should be very much obliged to the single young women of this mill, if they would pay their contributions more freely, and we will find them sweethearts."

"John o' Eldin's wears *sideboards* all week, takes *Manchester Examiner and Times*, but won't pay to Padiham."

The conclusion of the strike was ultimately brought about by the intervention, apparently unsolicited by either of the parties to the dispute, of the master manufacturers of Blackburn, who held a

meeting on the 10th of August, and appointed a deputation to go over to Padiham to investigate the question between the Padiham masters and their workpeople. The proceedings of this deputation and the result of their inquiry will sufficiently appear from the Report, which was as follows:—

"*To the Cotton-Spinners, &c., of Blackburn, and the Neighbourhood.*

"Report of the Committee appointed at a meeting of the Cotton-Spinners and Manufacturers of Blackburn and surrounding districts, to investigate the questions in dispute between the Padiham masters and their workpeople.

"Your committee, appointed at the meeting held by your body on Wednesday last, August 9, have, in compliance with your request, visited Padiham to investigate the prices offered by the masters to their operatives.

"Your committee thankfully acknowledge that the different masters afforded every facility to ascertain the basis for calculating the rates to be paid for different looms, and while engaged in this investigation at one of the mills your committee received a letter requesting an interview. The letter was as follows:—

"'Bridge Inn, Padiham, *Aug.* 15.

"'Gentlemen,—Will you have the kindness to admit of a deputation of the operatives to have an interview with you to lay down the justice of their claims in this struggle?

"'Yours respectfully, on behalf of the operatives on strike,

"'Abraham Pinder, *Secretary.*

"'P.S. An answer, per bearer, to the above is requested.

"'Yours, &c.

"'To the Committee of Inquiry into the cause of the Padiham Strike.'

"To which the following reply was sent:—

"'Sirs,—We are come here simply to ascertain if the wages offered by the Padiham masters to their weavers are equivalent to the Blackburn standard list. If your committee would like to meet us at the Starkie's Arms, at three o'clock, we shall be happy to talk with any four of you.

"'Yours truly (for the committee),

"'T. Crooke Ainsworth.'

"At the interview with the committee of operatives we first informed them we were holding a private meeting, in which every individual would only give his own sentiments, and we also stated distinctly our object.

"Your committee had a friendly discussion, and inquired from the operatives if they desired the examination of any particular mill, and such as were named to us by them we visited.

"Your committee, after a patient examination, and having measured exactly the emery beams and counted the wheels, for which purpose every facility was kindly conceded by the Padiham masters, have arrived at various dividends, which we subjoin in Appendix A,

and the data on which they were obtained we insert in the Appendix, for comparison, the dividend stated by the masters, and also that of the committee, and we find the difference to be more imaginary than real.

"We also insert a list of sorts and prices offered to be paid, with our calculations according to the Blackburn standard list. (See in Appendix B.)

"Taken as a whole, the prices offered by the Padiham masters, and admitted by the operatives' committee, are, when tested by the standard list, found fully equal to it.

"Your committee find many discrepancies which appear to arise solely from the different dividends, rendering it impossible to give precisely the same results for different makes of looms, and not from any wish to alter the basis of calculation.

"Your committee may say it appeared to them (and they cannot withhold the expression of their opinion) that there was no necessity for the strike, and that the masters' offer is one in all respects which the operatives ought to acquiesce in, and at once to accept.

"We must give all credit to the operatives' committee for their civil, courteous, and conciliatory bearing at our interview.

"Your committee pointed out to them and read the second and third clauses in the letter in the *Times* from the Association:—2. 'To establish the right of their secretary to enter any mill at his pleasure to examine the machinery;' and 3. 'To annul the right of master and man to settle or arrange any dispute, substituting the secretary as the only medium of communication, and who shall have the power to determine whether the hands remain at work or strike;' when they positively stated they did not insist on them, and wrote us subsequently as follows:—

"'PADIHAM, *Aug.* 16.

"GENTLEMEN,—This is to certify that the Padiham strike is purely a wages' question, as I have never asked for admission into any mill on any pretence whatever connected with this strike. Let them pay the Blackburn list prices and the strike is at an end.

"'Yours respectfully,

"'ABRAHAM PINDER, *Secretary.*'

"Your committee recommended both the employers and operatives to adopt a conciliatory and generous spirit, and also advised the operatives' committee to adopt the masters' terms, leaving minor questions to the masters, and admitting the principle that the disputes between masters and those employed by them should be negotiated between themselves.

"Your committee are aware the above discussion was beyond their province, but think it proper to lay before your body the feeling and the sentiments which their visit elicited.

"Your committee may say that a little asperity of feeling has retarded the settlement of the wage question, and feel that, from the disposition shown on both sides, a satisfactory arrangement of this

great and important question may, by a little consideration and reflection, be accomplished, and the Padiham strike be at an end.

"Your committee would be glad to learn that, in being the medium of ascertaining the feeling existing, they may have contributed in any way to terminate this unhappy dispute, and will rejoice if the operatives of Padiham and their masters may be brought together to follow their industrious career and calling.

"Your committee, in taking leave of this painful subject, would express the hope that in future every expedient will be exhausted, and cordial efforts between employers and operatives will be made, before a settlement is despaired of, or a strike, which should be a last resort, if ever, attempted.

"By order of the Commitee,

"T. Crooker Ainsworth, *Secretary*.

"Blackburn, *Aug.* 17."

"APPENDIX A.

Loom-maker's Name.	Size of Beam in Inches.	Teeth in Pinion.	Rack Wheel.	Stud.	Beam Wheel.	Our Dividend.	Master's Dividend.	Operative Committee.
Graham and Shephard	14⅜	16	50	90	90	439	436	437
Ditto	14½	—	—	—	—	442	442	442
Wilkinson's	16	15	—	—	—	428	428	428
Ditto	16	—	—	—	—	429	428	428
Cooper and Co.	15	—	—	—	—	457	456	456
Dodgson and Whittaker	15	—	—	—	—	457	456	456
Davidson and Price	16	—	—	—	—	428	428	428

"The looms of same makers have different sizes of beams, rendering it necessary to have different dividends for different mills.

"APPENDIX B.

Maker's Loom.	Sort (No.)	Reed.	Wheel (Teeth).	Length (Yards.	Width (Inches.)	Blackburn Standard List Price.	Prizes offered by Masters.
						d.	*d.*
On Wilkinson's looms	1	55	29	37½	39	10·97	11
On Graham and Co.'s, 14⅜ in. beams	1	55	30	37½	39	10·88	11
On do. 14½ in. beams	X	60	30	37½	39	11·27	11¼
On do. do.	X	60	30	50	36	14·26	14¼
On do. 14⅜ in. beams	2	51	36	37½	39	8·93	9
On Wilkinson's looms	2	—	35	—	39	8·96	9
On do. do.	3	51	38	—	—	8·25	8¼
On Graham and Co.'s 14⅜ in. beams	3	51	39	—	—	8·234	8¼
On do. do.	10	51	44	—	—	7·308	7¼
On Wilkinson's looms	10	51	42	—	—	7·46	7¼
On do. do	16	60	29	—	—	11·18	11
On Graham and Co.'s 14⅜ in. beams	16	60	30	—	—	11·08	11"

This report dealt a death-blow to the strike, emanating as it did from persons eminently qualified to judge of the matter in hand (the question being as to the correspondence of the Padiham prices with

the list they themselves had prepared, and on which they were paying), and whose interest, if operating at all, would certainly not be to enable the Padiham masters to pay lower wages than themselves, and bearing on the face of it, as it did, evidence of the careful, thorough, and fair manner in which the inquiry had been conducted.

It was answered as follows, by the Operatives' Committee:—

"PADIHAM STRIKE.

"A report having appeared in the Manchester papers (*Examiner* and *Guardian*) on Friday, August 19th, 1859, stating the details of a report drawn up by the Committee of Inquiry, appointed by the Cotton-Spinners and Manufacturers' Association of Blackburn, to inquire into the causes of the strike at Padiham. In that report they have given the particulars of different sorts of looms, and have attached their various dividends; from those dividends they have worked out the prices of a number of sorts of cloth, calling them Blackburn standard list prices, with the prices offered by the Padiham masters, and annexed in the Appendix B. It looks rather strange how they could assert that the prices the masters were offering were fully up to the standard list, when on three sorts out of five, on Wilkinson's Looms, they acknowledged to the operatives' committee, that Mr. T—— would have to put a farthing on to be equal to the list, and they said that he had promised to put a 35 teeth wheel on instead of a 34 on one sort, to make up this deficiency. Now Mr. T—— denies this assertion altogether, and swears that he never promised to alter anything. Besides, how could they say those were the standard list prices, when they knew that they were one per cent. below on every sort (with the exception of those marked X) as you will see by the following copy:—

"GRAHAM'S LOOMS, 439 DIVIDEND.

Sort.	Loom.	Cloth.	Reed.	Wheel.	Length.	Masters' offer.	Committee of Inquiry's Standard Price.	Standard List Price.
1	40	39	55	30	37½	11*d.*	10·88*d.*	10·99*d.* or 11*d.*
2	,,	,,	51	36	,,	9*d.*	8·98*d.*	9·02*d.* or 9*d.*
3	,,	,,	,,	39	,,	8¼*d.*	8·284*d.*	8·32*d.* or 8⅜*d.*
10	,,	,,	,,	44	,,	7¼*d.*	7·308*d.*	7·37*d.* or 7⅜*d.*
16	,,	,,	60	30	,,	11*d.*	11·08*d.*	11·205*d.* or 11¼*d.*

"WILKINSON'S LOOMS, 429 DIVIDEND.

1	40	39	55	29	37½	11*d.*	10·99*d.*	11·11*d.* or 11⅛*d.*
2	,,	,,	51	34	,,	9*d.*	9·22*d.*	9·32*d.* or 9⅜*d.*
3	,,	,,	,,	38	,,	8¼*d.*	8·25*d.*	8·35*d.* or 8⅜*d.*
10	,,	,,	,,	42	,,	7¼*d.*	7·46*d.*	7·55*d.* or 7½*d.*
16	,,	,,	60	29	,,	11*d.*	11·18*d.*	11·325*d.* or 11⅜*d.*

"Judge for yourselves, as to whether we are right or wrong. If we are wrong, let any one come forward to prove it, and we will submit to be set right. They have never proved us wrong in our claims, our course is clear, it is the list prices we want, and nothing less will suffice.

"Yours, on behalf of the Padiham Committee,

"ABRAHAM PINDER, *Secretary.*

"PADIHAM, *August 23rd*, 1859."

As this document was issued in reply to the report of the committee of inquiry, I have inserted it here, but it is needless to point out who was most likely to be able to work out a list of prices according to the Blackburn standard list, the Blackburn masters, or the secretary of the Padiham Association.

The effect of this report was not immediately felt; but on the 9th September a conference took place at Blackburn, between a deputation from the executive committee of the East Lancashire Association and a deputation from the Blackburn masters' committee, when it was decided (subject to the approval of the weavers' executive committee) that as the committee's list was only an exceedingly small fraction below the standard list of prices, the operatives should resume work immediately, if the Padiham masters would undertake to pay them according to the list approved by the Blackburn masters' committee.

On the 14th September the deputation of the executive committee of the Weavers' Association waited upon the Padiham masters, and asked permission to measure the "reed spaces" in their respective mills. This application was refused, but the masters offered to allow the measurement to be made by some of their own operatives, accompanied by two disinterested persons. This offer was accepted by the deputation; the measurement required was made; and the deputation, having ascertained the result, returned to Blackburn. On their arrival there they proceeded to the Odd Fellows' Arms Hotel, King Street, where the full executive committee were awaiting them. The entire question was then entered into, and it was found that after making the deduction in the measurement of "reed spaces" agreed to a few years ago, but which the operatives had unfortunately lost sight of at the time they struck work, the list of prices offered by the Blackburn masters' committee recently was virtually that of the Blackburn standard list, for which the operatives turned out. After some discussion, it was agreed that the deputation wait upon the masters' committee, who were assembled at the Fielden's Arms, Market Place. The deputation went there, and were received by Messrs. A. B——— and W. B———, two of the members of the Blackburn masters' committee, to whom had been referred the settlement of the strike. The operatives were informed that the Padiham manufacturers had undertaken to pay the list of prices agreed upon by the Blackburn committee, and on this being reported to the committee at the Oddfellows' Hall, the matter was discussed for upwards of an hour and a half. At last the question was put to the vote, and by a majority of thirteen votes it was decided that the terms offered by the committee be accepted, and that the operative weavers of Padiham now on strike resume their labours at their respective mills. Twenty-seven votes were given on this occasion; twenty of them were given in favour of the settlement, and seven against it.*

* See *Manchester Guardian*, Sept. 16, 1859.

This decision of the executive committee was not at once adopted, as it practically amounted to a surrender on the part of the operatives, but the executive committee being composed of delegates from the various districts from which the supplies in support of the strike were drawn, it was obviously in vain to contend against a decision which they had adopted by so large a majority. On the 19th September a meeting was held at Padiham, at which the Rev. E. A. Verity occupied the chair.

Both the chairman and one of the paid delegates contended that the operatives had been "sold" by the deputation which had waited upon the Blackburn masters, and the men were urged to stand out for the Blackburn list.—One of the Padiham deputies at the Board, said that the other deputies would scarcely hear him speak, telling him he was paid for his services. Many of the deputies at that Board maintained that the offer of the masters was equal to the standard list, but Mr. Pinder told them plainly it was not. *The secretary for Blackburn said if they did not resume work they would stop supplies, and begin to support the masters.* He said it was moved by Clitheroe, and seconded by Accrington, that the reed space be six inches. It was moved by Blackburn, and seconded by Barrowford, they should resume work ; but Colne stood boldly against it, although it was a down-trodden place.

Resolutions were then come to, appointing a deputation to confer. with the central executive committee with a view to induce them to reconsider their decision.*

The result will best appear from the following account of a meeting at Padiham on Sunday the 25th September, extracted from the *Manchester Guardian* of the 26th September.

A great meeting was held in the Oddfellows' Hall, Padiham, on Sunday. The delegates held a special meeting prior to the commencement of the general meeting, with the view to elicit the general tone and opinion of the districts as to the ratification of the agreement made between the operatives' deputation and the Blackburn masters' committee on the previous Wednesday evening. Shortly before eleven o'clock they re-entered the Hall and it was apparent that some disagreement had taken place, and an effort was made by the anti-strike party to place the deputy for Harwood in the chair, while the pro-strike party moved the re-election of Mr. L——, one of the paid delegates, as chairman. After some confusion and uproar, the Harwood deputy withdrew, and Mr. L—— took the chair. He urged the operatives to be firm and cautious at this crisis, and thus obtain a final settlement on a firm basis, and above all things to place reliance and confidence in their executive committee. The deputies from Ramsbottom, Barrowford, Haslingden, Colne, Burnley, Leigh, Bolton, Preston, Chorley, Clitheroe, Harwood, Enfield, Accrington, Church, Darwen, and Blackburn, spoke in favour of the operatives resuming work, in order to give the masters

* See the *Manchester Guardian*, 20th September, 1859.

a fair trial; and if it was found that they did not fully pay up to the Blackburn standard list, the operatives would again be brought out, and be amply supported by the various districts. Mr. P——, secretary to the Blackburn Weavers' Association, denied that the Blackburn Association had compromised the case of the Padiham weavers, as had been stated. *He also denied that the Blackburn Association were withdrawing their support from the operatives; but intimated that they should do so, if they did not resume work on the terms offered, and see whether the masters would pay the standard list of prices.* The chairman then exhorted the operatives to accept those conditions, and stand to the decisions of the executive committee. The meeting unanimously decided still to abide by the decisions of the executive. In the afternoon the deputation, formed at the operatives' meeting at Padiham, consisting of three males and females, waited upon the executive committee, asking them not to ratify the decision they had agreed to on the previous Wednesday. The committee heard the objections of the operatives which had reference to the 'reed-space,' but refused to concede the demand. It was ultimately decided that the operatives should resume work; but if, at the expiration of a fortnight, it was found that the masters were not paying the standard list of prices, they should again be brought out by the executive."

Up to this period the strike had lasted twenty-seven weeks, but the collections continued for two weeks longer, the 29th and last weekly balance-sheet being issued on the 10th October, when an amount of £415 14*s.* 7*d.* was acknowledged to be in hand, in cash and in the bank. No detailed statement is given of the expenditure of this amount, but by the final report containing a summary of the receipts and payments on account of the strike from 28th March to 26th December, it appears that the expenditure continued, though at a gradually decreasing rate, to the 26th December, when the balance in hand was reduced to £5 14*s.* 4½*d.*

The following is an analysis of the result of the balance-sheets.

THE COST OF THE PADIHAM STRIKE.

Towns.	Sum Collected. £	*s.*	*d.*	Sum sent to Padiham. £	*s.*	*d.*
Blackburn	2,529	12	0¾	2,359	2	5½
Darwen	1,148	8	4¾	1,152	7	2½
Church and Rishton	756	7	1½	711	12	4½
Accrington	901	6	3½	848	7	2¾
Enfield	488	12	9¾	457	9	2¾
Great Harwood	744	1	4½	691	15	9½
Padiham and Sabden	788	7	11	651	16	4½
Clitheroe	607	17	7¾	527	15	9½
Chorley	292	7	3½	258	6	1½
Preston	1,032	18	11¾	939	18	11½
Bolton	552	2	9½	467	8	8
Leigh and Tyldesley	266	1	7	240	15	0
Burnley	456	4	0¾	404	12	10
Colne	293	12	4½	268	9	8½
Haslingden	158	8	11	144	1	9½

Barrowford and Nelson	£223	5	0½	.....	£177	19	9½
Ramsbottom	72	7	5	.....	66	2	6
Halshaw Moor, Priestwich, and Bacup	11	3	3	.....	11	3	3
Manchester	5	0	0	.....	5	0	0
Total.....	£11,334	12	1½		£10,380	11	5

It will be seen that the amount collected from the various towns realizes £11,334 12*s.* 1½*d.*, while the money sent to Padiham by the same towns was £10,380 11*s.* 5*d.*, the difference in these items £953 0*s.* 8½*d.*, or nearly 9 per cent., having been expended in the process of collection.*

The following is the analysis given by the Weavers' Association at the foot of their final report :—

TOTAL OF FORTY WEEKS.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Amount paid to hands	8,624	4	0
Amount paid to distressed families	511	9	0
Amount of working expenses, including law expenses, removing families, &c.	1,245	19	10
Cash in hand	5	14	4½
	£10,387	6	2½

AVERAGE OF FORTY WEEKS.

Number of hands paid weekly	659	0	0
Amount paid to hands weekly	215	12	1
Amount paid to distressed families	12	15	$8\frac{7}{10}$
Weekly amount of working expenses, including law expenses, removing families, &c.	31	2	$11\frac{85}{100}$

These weekly averages are brought down lower than they otherwise would have been, owing to the period taken going down to 26th December, for the last four weeks of which time the payments were only small.

The sum of £1,245 19*s.* 10*d.* in the above totals is made up as follows :—

	£	*s.*	*d.*	£	*s.*	*d.*
Payments to officials, viz.						
Advocates and deputies' expenses and fares	324	11	9½			
Collection at Colne, Burnley, Barrowford, &c.† ...	127	8	5			
Local Secretary and Treasurer, and General Secretary's fares	40	4	8			
				492	4	10½
Printing and office expenses, viz.						
Rent of meeting and pay rooms, &c.	67	5	3½			
Printing, stationery, and carriage of parcels	607	11	2			
Postage and receipt stamps	6	9	4			
				681	5	9½

* This analysis is taken from the *Manchester Guardian*, of October 22nd, 1859. The set of balance-sheets with which I have been furnished being short of the first, I am unable to verify the figures perfectly. The total amount sent to Padiham, according to the final Report of the Association, was £10,887 7*s.* 2½*d.*, being £6 15*s.* 9½*d.* more than the amount above stated.

† This must be in addition to the sums deducted before remittance.

Law expenses, and money paid to Mr. Verity,			
Law expenses at Padiham	£40 0 0		
Ditto at Bamber Bridge	4 15 0		
Money advanced to Mr. Verity...	22 12 2		
		67 7 2	
Removing families		5 2 0	
		£1,245 19 10	

The total amount paid for expenses of management, printing, &c., therefore, without counting the money paid for removing families, which is properly relief money, is £1,240 17*s.* 10*d.*, which amount, added to the £953 0*s.* 8½*d.* deducted for expenses of collection, &c., before the money was remitted to Padiham, gives £2,193 18*s.* 6½*d.*, or a little over ninteen per cent. of the £11,334 12*s.* 1½*d.* collected, the amount actually distributed in relief being only £9,140 15*s.* 0*d.*

The expenditure of £2,193, in collecting and distributing £11,334 is certainly an enormous allowance, being equivalent, to 3*s.* 9½*d.* in the pound, or about 2¼*d.* in the shilling.

It must however be recollected that the chief part of the large amount collected was collected in pence, the rate at which the weavers in other establishments paid being at so much a loom, generally 2*d.* or 3*d.*

I do not find in the balance-sheets any evidence of their having been audited or checked in any way, but I am informed that they were audited by two members of the committee. I find several mistakes of small amounts even by examination of the sheets themselves.

The publication in each sheet of the amounts collected from each mill is some check, though not a very perfect one, on the correctness of the sheets, as some of the hands in the mill would probably know about what amount was collected. The practice was for the collectors to go out two together, one taking the money, and the other entering it in a book. I have made inquiry whether the late turn-outs, or other parties connected with the Union, make any complaints of dishonesty in dealing with the funds, but the accounts I receive are contradictory. However, I find even from an early period of the strike, placards signed "A Weaver" and "An Overlooker," which I am informed on inquiry were *bonâ fide* productions of persons situated as they represent themselves to be, expressing want of confidence in the committee, complaining of the paid advocates receiving 30*s.* a week whilst the weavers got only 7*s.*, entering into calculations to show that it would take upwards of three years to make up the amount they were losing by getting an allowance of 7*s.* instead of 16*s.* wages, and threatening investigation of the accounts.

These complaints are nowhere very completely or satisfactorily answered.

One reply, signed "A Weaver," defends the refusal to allow the books to be inspected by "*disaffected members*," but suggests that the Committee would allow an investigation "by proper persons, selected at a proper time, and in a proper place."

Another weaver says, "Now I tell you I am a weaver, and would sign my name and go to work to-morrow, but I know you lovers of freedom would '*take me home.*'"

It appears from the balance-sheets themselves, that the paid advocates, whose business it was to go about to the different towns in the district attending meetings, received 30*s.* a week each, besides their railway fares, and that considerable sums were also paid to deputies and collectors.

Taking a few weeks here and there at random, as specimens, I find in the balance-sheet, dated 11th of July, £13 16*s.* 4*d.* paid to advocates and deputies, and for their railway fares, £2 15*s.* 0*d.*; for collecting at Burnley (the Burnley contribution being only £10 9*s.* 1*d.*, off which £1 9*s.* 4½*d.* is already deducted as expenses), £2 0*s.* 0*d.*; for collecting at Colne (the Colne contribution being £9 10*s.* 11*d.*, off which are deducted bills and posting, 7*s.*, rent of room, 2*s.*, man to Padiham, 2*s.*, total 11*s.*); and 12*s.* for local secretary and treasurer, being in all £19 13*s.* 4*d.* for the officials and their personal expenses, in addition to which is charged £15 4*s.* 6*d.* for printing 10,000 balance-sheets, 10*s.* 9*d.* for carriage of same, and 8*s.* for parcels and postages.

On June the 4th: Paid to advocates, and deputies, and secretaries, and their expenses, £11 5*s.* 6*d.*, collecting £17 16*s.* 7*d.* at Burnley and Colne (besides £1 10*s.* 0*d.* Burnley expenses) £4 3*s.* 6*d.*; total £15 9*s.* 0*d.*; printing and posting, £27 18*s.* 6*d.*; postages, parcels, and conveyance to Harwood, £1 9*s.* 6*d.*

On May the 9th: Paid to advocates, deputies, and secretaries, and their expenses, £12 4*s.* 11½*d.*; collecting £18 11*s.* 5½*d.* at Burnley, Colne, and Barrowford (besides £1 9*s.* 1*d.* local expenses) £4 15*s.* 0*d.*, total £16 19*s.* 11½*d.*; for officials' printing, £12 4*s.* 4½*d.*, parcels and postages, £1 11*s.* 6*d.* For printing, the amounts paid seem to have been erroneous.

The persons who were receiving 30*s.* a week and their travelling expenses as paid advocates, were of the same class as the weavers, that is, could have earned at their ordinary occupation not more than £1 a week.

Looking at the foregoing figures, and remembering the origin of the strike, the very small amount in dispute, even on the showing of the unionists, the pertinacity with which the wrong position taken was adhered to, and the reluctance with which the decision of the Blackburn masters, confirmed by the executive committee of the Union, was submitted to,—it is difficult to resist the opinion that the pecuniary interest of the managers had a great influence on the course pursued.

If a trades' union is to be an institution always at work in full vigour, and agitation a permanent feature of the organization, it would certainly be wise to select the cleverest men as advocates, to engage their services permanently, and pay them well. But if on the contrary, the society is to confine itself to playing a watching game, being quiescent when wages are good, and starting into energetic activity only when forced to it by circumstances, and with

reluctance, a different policy is required. A strike being in itself an admitted evil, and not the normal condition of a trade society, it is essentially a false step to adjust the scales of management so as to make it any one's interest to bring on, or to prolong, what ought to be an exceptional state of things. A chief complaint of the placarders, whether widely entertained or not, is that they were only paid 7*s*., whilst their leaders were pocketing 30*s*. Popular leaders should place their disinterestedness above suspicion. It is impossible that the employers or the public would regard with any confidence, or be willing to treat with, men who had a direct pecuniary interest in not coming to terms.

If the management of the strike had been entrusted to some of the turn-outs themselves, paid at the same rate as the rest, it could not have lasted as many weeks as it did months.

It must be remembered, of course, that we are not called upon to judge the managers of the Padiham strike individually, but merely to examine the system. Individually there is not very much to be surprised at in their conduct;—large sums of money were passing through their hands, and they probably managed them as well, and as honestly as any average set of men, accidently placed by circumstances in a position of great and novel responsibility would have done.

There was no doubt great exasperation existing between the weavers and their employers, which is many times alluded to by the weavers' committee; but though that may excuse the turn-outs, it is no apology for their leaders, especially for those who were not Padiham men, as their office should have been to have cooled down, and not to have encouraged, such feelings, and to have looked calmly at the real interests of their constituents.

It may seem very surprising that so large a body of operatives should have allowed themselves to be so led, and have given up earnings of 16*s*. a week during six months, to receive 6*s*. or 7*s*., for the sake of a dispute not involving more than about 3*s*. a week even if their leaders were right. But it must be remembered that the results of the figures we have been examining, and the real amount in dispute were but imperfectly understood by most of the operatives, and, moreover, that the 16*s*. a week were to be earned by labour for ten hours a day, whilst the 6*s*. or 7*s*. were paid for idling, and the persons receiving it were at liberty to make earnings in other employments, which many of them actually did to no small extent. One of the men somewhat naively said at a meeting "*That they would not work while they could get* 6*s*. *a week for laking*," (*i.e.* playing or idling.)

This no doubt would not have influenced the married men with families too young to enter the mills; but they were in an exceptional position, and were no doubt a minority, and some of them evidently did grumble and protest at the position they were forced into against their will; but to single persons, and those with families old enough to claim allowance, 6*s*. a week was a support. Moreover the season was summer, idleness was pleasant, and for those who

wished to work, there was work in the hay-field, which did not interfere with their also receiving relief as turn-outs.

Notwithstanding the great amount of money spent on the Padiham strike, and the still more serious loss of wages, it is by no means clear that the lesson of that useless sacrifice has taught the operatives much wisdom; the number of weavers out on strike, compared with the exclusive and populous district on which they drew for their support, was small, and the contributions did not press heavily on any individual. Another strike is at this moment (August, 1860) in progress at Colne, conducted by the same Union, and with the same object of obtaining the Blackburn standard list.

On the other hand, though the losses of the men were so great, neither the Padiham masters nor those who supported them probably lost much by the struggle.

For the continuance of the Padiham strike was effectually used as a reason for delaying an advance of wages which would otherwise have been made, in other places of the district; and one of the contributors informed me, that what he should have had to pay in increased wages, if there had been no strike, was, within a trifle, equal to the sum he had contributed to the support of the Padiham masters; therefore the other operatives of the district were in fact supporting both masters and men at Padiham in idleness. This powerful combination of the operatives has taught the masters to combine also, and the combination of capitalists will in the end be the most powerful.

I do not see in the circumstance of the extensive character of the East Lancashire Weavers' Association cause for the alarm, that the Barnsley Masters' Association appeared by their circular to entertain. The extensiveness of the Union certainly increased the power of the men, for no signs of exhaustion in their funds were apparent, and they might evidently have carried on the struggle till now, if they had pleased. But, at the same time, the extension of the field brought in parties with other feelings, and other interests, and so gives good sense and justice a better chance of being heard, and to that very cause was owing the termination of the strike; for the deputies from Blackburn and other places, being once satisfied that there was no just cause for the strike, terminated it at once by a majority of three to one.

And supposing, for sake of argument, the favourite project of the Union—namely, an enforcement of a uniform list over the whole district was accomplished, and wages could not be altered without the consent of a union embracing the whole district that fed the Padiham strike—the masters, and not the men, would be the real gainers. Common interest would force the masters to combine too, as the Blackburn masters have done. When trade justified a rise of wages, the tendency of the Union would be to postpone rather than to accelerate it. No individual master could be successfully applied to for an advance, as he would at once reply that he could not grant it unless it was made general. And if a rise were asked for not justified by the state of trade, or a reduction that was justified by the state of trade

were resisted, the extensiveness of the Union would not increase the chances of success; for a general strike would be impossible, and a local strike, with the view of beating the masters in detail, would be easily defeated by their combination. Political economy, as surely as any other natural law, is taught by experience. A combination of weavers no doubt, like any other association, may get into bad or incompetent hands, and much temporary mischief may be done by an attempt to struggle against natural laws. But ultimately the operatives, pushed into the position of leaders of a great organization, would learn wisdom and habits of business by practice in the management of affairs, and they would certainly find out that the organization of labour might be pushed too far for the interests of labourers, and that the true office of their union was not to attempt to enforce an unnatural uniformity, but, leaving the law of supply and demand to its natural operation on the price of labour, to confine themselves to putting the individual labourer in as favourable a position for taking advantage of that natural law as the capitalist, by saving him from being forced to accept less than the fair market price for his labour, through fear of starvation. There would then be no such interference as we have seen in the case of Padiham, no desire to promote a strike, but when such an extreme measure needed to be resorted to, it would be left entirely to those immediately concerned in it, the Union merely scrutinizing, and that very rigidly, the justice of their claim to a temporary support by the labour of others.

This is, however, a subject which justly requires very deep consideration. The cotton manufacture is the very life of England. We have hitherto kept with ease ahead of all other nations in this branch of industry, but several foreign countries are now running us very close in the race, and if trade combinations should, even for a time, throw us back, it would be a blow we might never recover from. For the reasons above stated, however, I do not see that there is any ground to fear such a result. It may or may not be true, that a trade of a limited and local character may be injured or driven away by an ignorant interference with the conditions necessary to its prosperity, but the very extensiveness of the cotton manufacture appears to me to secure it from this evil.

In speaking, however, of the *abuse* of unions we must not lose sight of their *use*, and notwithstanding the misuse of their power by the Weavers' Association, the Padiham strike still shows the utility of the Union, if rightly managed. The ten per cent. advance offered before the strike was offered, chiefly owing to the position the men were enabled to take through the support given to them by the Association, and would not have been obtained without it. It would be in vain to preach to the men against trades' unions, after such an example.

There is another important question arising out of this strike that I have still left unexamined, namely, whether the masters were right or wrong in refusing to deal with Mr. Pinder, the secretary of the association, in the settlement of the dispute between themselves and

their men, or to allow him or any nominee of the Union, as a matter of right, to enter their mills and measure the machinery, for the purpose of verifying the correspondence of their prices with the Blackburn list.

The masters appear to me to have been unconciliatory and injudicious in their mode of treating the application, and I think that, while refusing the claim of any third party to interfere as a matter of right, they might, without sacrifice of dignity or principle, have received Mr. Pinder as the agent of their own men, and pointed out, as they afterwards did, a course by which their own men could, by calling in third parties to their assistance, satisfy themselves of the correctness of the calculations on which the payment for their labour was to be based. The men were as much parties to the contract as the masters, and had an equal right to test its conditions, and the masters were bound in common justice to afford them all reasonable facilities for doing so; and if they declined to let Mr. Pinder make this examination as the agent of their men, because the claim was made in a way that gave it too much the colour of a claim to *a right to interfere* in the contracts to be made between themselves and their men, they should have confined themselves strictly to that ground, by at once pointing out some other mode in which their men could satisfy themselves on the point in dispute.

At the same time, I think the masters had a perfect right to decline to treat with any association comprising others besides their own hands, as to the terms on which they should pay for the labour they required. The men had a perfect right to form any association they pleased, and to consult the committee of such association as to the terms on which they would dispose of their labour, and if they pleased, to be guided by the united wisdom of the association rather than their own; but they had no right to insist on their masters dealing with the association instead of with themselves directly. Even if the only claim of the association or its secretary was to be treated as the agent of the men, the masters were quite justified in refusing to treat through an agent, who, they considered, was giving injudicious advice to his principal touching the matter in hand, still more with an agent whom they suspected of making himself a principal for the purpose of carrying out a more extensive object, of which the Padiham question only formed part.

Some persons justified the conduct of the men, by quoting the masters, who have done the same, and instanced their stating that they were pledged to their association not to settle the strike with the committee or their secretary, but only with their own hands. But I can see no weight in such an argument. I do not deny the right of either men or masters to combine, and to be guided, if they please, in their individual action, by the decision of the majority of the association, but neither of them have any right to force it on the other party, that they should treat not with themselves individually, but with an association of which they formed part only.

It is much to be deplored that we do not see in this strike any in-

clination, on the part of the men, to abandon the practice of attempting, by intimidation, to compel the minority to obey the decisions of the majority. Happily there were few breaches of the peace, and in that respect modern strikes in the Lancashire cotton districts show a great improvement when compared with those of thirty years ago, as for instance with the Ashton strike of 1831. But the element of intimidation was still present and active. This attempt of the turn-outs to prevent others from accepting a price for their labour, which they themselves refuse, is an unmixed evil, and is the worst feature of trades' societies. It is a breach alike of economical and moral laws, and is true tyranny. Human nature, however, is the same in all ranks, and whilst blaming the Padiham turn-outs, we must not forget that they are only practising the same attempt to regulate the price at which a commodity shall be sold, that was formerly practised by trade guilds, and even carried out by acts of Parliament, and that has been, even in our day, actually enforced by an edict of the Emperor of France; and as other bodies have in time learnt the folly of such a course, no doubt the operatives will in time follow in their steps.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

SPINNERS' STRIKE AT ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE

IN 1830.

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

BY WILLIAM A. JEVONS.

IN December, 1830, the whole of the spinners and other hands in fifty-two factories at Ashton-under-Lyne, Dukinfield, Staleybridge, and Mossley, left their employment, to the number of, it was said, about 18,000. The turn-outs at first attempted to perambulate the district in enormous processions, of several thousands in number, with banners, and armed with pistols, which they occasionally fired off; but the magistrates of Ashton and Manchester, having issued notices that such proceedings were illegal, they were discontinued. The dispute in this case was between the reduced price of 3*s.* 9*d.* per 1000 hanks of No. 40's offered by the masters, and 4*s.* 2*d.* claimed by the men. The following resolution was advertised in the newspapers of the day, purporting to emanate from a general meeting of delegates of the operative spinners of the United Kingdom.

"We, the deputies appointed by the general body of operative spinners, being fully invested by our constituents with such power, *do determine that a general strike* of all those spinners who are receiving less than 4*s.* 2*d.* per 1000 hanks for No. 40's (and other numbers in proportion) on all sizes of wheels, *shall take place* on Monday the 27th instant; *not one of whom shall return to work until the full price be given.*"

These orders were intended to apply to the whole of the manufacturing districts, but in fact, except the spinners already on strike in the neighbourhood of Ashton, they were only obeyed by the hands of about forty mills, in Glossop and Longdendale.

Very early in this strike (on the 18th December, 1830) the following resolution of the Masters' Association was inserted as an advertisement in the *Manchester Guardian*, and other papers.

"That the Association have formed their price list from the best information they could obtain, and believe it to be a fair average of

the price paid in the immediate surrounding districts, which they have to meet in the same market; and that disclaiming all idea of obtaining their labour below that of the spinners and manufacturers similarly situated, they are willing to submit it to a public examination, and abide by the result."

No notice was at first taken by the operatives of this document, but afterwards they made application to the masters for a meeting, which was arranged to take place on the 20th of January, at the Manor Court-room at Ashton. A deputation of two men represented the operatives. The masters submitted to the meeting a list of four resolutions agreed to by the Masters' Association, of which the two last were as follows :—

" 3. That though the Association see no reason to believe that the list adopted is below the above mentioned average rate, they are perfectly willing to enter with the operatives into an examination of the prices paid at the commencement of the turn-out, either in the immediate surrounding districts, or the mills connected with the Manchester market (the mills of the Association being excluded), both parties agreeing to abide by the result of an average determined by the proportionate amount of spindles working at the respective prices.

" 4. That a committee of twelve masters and twelve men be appointed for the purpose of ascertaining the average, subdividing themselves into committee for the different districts."

This meeting was conducted without any of those expressions of acrimonious feeling which might have been expected, but it produced no practical result. The masters, after submitting the foregoing resolutions, offered to supersede them by an offer of 3*s.* 9*d.*—but that proposal being submitted to the men, was unanimously rejected. Several of the men then intimated their objection to adopting an average list, calculated according to the number of spindles, and finally, the two parties separating, the men sent into the masters an offer to accept 4*s.* 1*d.*, which was rejected, the masters abiding by their list, and the men practically declining to enter upon the calculations of an average list founded on the number of spindles, but contending for an average list framed according to the prices paid in the different districts without reference to the number of spindles.

Great irritation arose amongst the operatives from the failure of this attempt at a settlement of the dispute, and their organ, a paper called *The Voice of the People*, wrote of the matter in such unmeasured terms as the following : " We had expected that oppression in the Ashton neighbourhood would have been relaxed in its cruel gripings by the pacific and conciliatory demeanour of the operatives, who were deputed to hold an interview with the master cotton-spinners. But alas ! the importunities of 30,000 famishing people met with no sympathy. No expression of kindness was suffered to calm the irritation injustice had produced. The masters abruptly and indifferently retired to their homes, leaving their sullen reserve and soul-cutting contempt to produce their natural

effects. . . . In conclusion, we feel we are only doing our duty when we say to the masters, *Beware of the bad and dangerous spirit your obdurate exactions are engendering.*"

The move next made was on the part of the masters, who issued the following advertisement :—

" Notice.—At a general meeting of the Associated Master Spinners and Manufacturers of Ashton-under-Lyne, Staleybridge, Dukinfield, and Mossley, held at the White Bear Inn, Piccadilly, Manchester, on Tuesday, the 1st day of February instant, it was unanimously resolved :—' That the mills of the Association be opened on Thursday, the 3rd day of February instant, to offer employment to such of their workmen as choose to resume the same, at the masters' list price; and all such as do not return to their work their places will be supplied by others."

The mills were accordingly opened on the day named. At a few of the mills more or less of the hands returned to work the same day, and the following week considerable progress was made in filling the mills, and the return of the old hands was much accelerated by the influx of unemployed spinners from other districts, many of whom had been for a long time out of work, and who were consequently very glad to obtain employment. These new hands displaced some of the old ones who were too slow in returning to their work, and others of the old hands who had made themselves obnoxious to the masters during the 'strike were refused work on that account; and from these causes, it was supposed, that in Staleybridge alone there were nearly a hundred hands, who, their places having been supplied by others, were unable to obtain work. At other places also in the district the same result occurred. Some slight attempts were made to interfere with the hands who had returned to their work, but they were successfully repressed.

Attempts were made by the operatives' Union to maintain the strike, but without success, and shortly all the mills were at work again.

During this strike the men were supported by a very extensive union, called the " National Association for the Protection of Labour," and meetings were held in their favour in many different parts of the country; but owing to the great number of persons thrown out of employment, the resources at the disposal of the Union were found quite inadequate to their support, and very great distress was the consequence, as was acknowledged by the organs of both parties.

I cannot find in the ground taken by the operatives any substantial complaints but the ordinary ones, that the wages offered were not such as the masters could have afforded to give, or in other words that the division of profit between the capitalist and the labourer was an unfair one, and that they were below the general average of the district. These positions, however, were advanced with much acrimony, and an extraordinary amount of ill feeling was engendered. At a meeting at Glasgow, held in support of the men, I find the following resolutions were passed :—

"That the attempt made by fifty-two employers in Ashton, Staleybridge, &c., to reduce wages, is a wanton, selfish, and cruel attempt to destroy the interests of the working classes in the United Kingdom, as from every information, both from the honourable employers in the trade and others, there is at this time no occasion to reduce the wages of the operatives.

"That as the twenty thousand individuals who have resisted this impolitic and uncalled for reduction of wages have, and are, in consequence suffering severe privations, in the principle that their case involves a great and extended interest; they are therefore entitled to encouragement and pecuniary support from all branches of trade, and from every true friend of the human race."

There were many assertions published at the time in the papers advocating the side of the masters, and urging that the wages earned by the men at the masters' list of prices were liberal, and that they averaged nearly 30*s.* a week. I find *The Voice of the People* replying to them as follows :—

"But there is a more important point of view in which these gentlemen ought to be vieved by the country. We are not aware that any decisive proof has ever been offered to the public of the havock which these 'cotton hells' make with their unhappy inmates. Few, comparatively, are able to follow their employment as spinners more than fifteen years. These fifty-two, and others in the same business, are continually telling us of the large earnings which their hands receive; but it will be seen from the following table, which has been prepared from the individual statements of the men now turned out of these mills, that they should receive much higher wages than at present falls to their lot, to place them on an equality with other descriptions of labourers.

"Out of 1,669 men employed as spinners and stretchers in their mills, not more than one-fourth exceed the age of thirty-five, and only one in twenty are employed above forty-five. These facts speak for themselves. We shall leave the public to draw their own conclusions." Here follows the table from which the above results are taken. It appears therefore that the amount of wages earned was substantially admitted. This turn-out is unfortunately remarkable for the very serious outrages which attended it. On one occasion a body of the turn-outs, to the number of 500 or 600, attacked the factory of Messrs. John and William Sidebottom and Co., at Millbrook in Longdendale, the hands of which had turned out along with those employed at the other mills in the neighbourhood, but a portion of whom had returned to their work. The mob found their way into the mill, and dragged the spinners whom they found at work into the road, where they turned all their coats inside out, tied them together with cords, inscribed the obnoxious price 3*s.* 9*d.* on their backs with chalk, drove them along the road for five or six miles and then dismissed them, after informing them, that if they were found working again until they had obtained their price, their lives would be forfeited.

There was also about the same time, namely on the 3rd of January, 1831, a still more atrocious act committed, in the murder of Mr. Thomas Ashton, who was shot on his way from his father's house at Pole Bank, near Hyde, to his own factory. The perpetrators of this crime were not discovered till three years afterwards, when two men, named James Garside and Joseph Mossley, were tried and convicted at the Chester Assizes, partly upon the evidence of William Mossley, an approver, and upon the confession of Garside, both of whom spoke to the murder being done by the order of the Union, and that they were to receive £10 for it.* This evidence being given some considerable time after the event, and by the parties concerned, there appears no reason to suspect it. About the same time Mr. James Howard, a cotton-spinner of Spring Grove, was fired at through the window when sitting in his counting house. Mr. Howard was a member of the Association of Master Spinners, and his hands had turned out, along with the others. On the 14th of January, Mr. Charles Kershaw, of Mossley, one of the spinners whose workpeople had joined the turn-out, was sitting in his kitchen in the evening, as he was in the habit of doing, when a gun or pistol charged with six bullets was fired through the back window, but owing to the charge striking against one of the stanchions of the window, no injury was done to him, or to any of his family, who were sitting with him at the time.

The conclusions I have arrived at as to this strike are as follows:

1. That it arose from a mere wages question.

2. That the question in dispute was not whether the men were, irrespective of the state of trade, entitled to a minimum rate of wages sufficient to support life in comfort, but whether the masters were paying a fair market rate of wages.

3. That although to some extent, probably, the men gave in from physical distress, to a great extent they were forced to a surrender by the masters being about to fill their mills with other hands, and that therefore the state of the labour market practically decided the matter in dispute in favour of the masters.

4. That the statements I have access to do not enable me to decide whether the average prices of the manufacturing districts

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* William Mossley, the approver, said, "The two men talked with Garside and my brother, but I could not hear perfectly what was said. I heard something about 'the Union.' They remained talking about half an hour, when they went I joined my brother and Garside, and I asked them what they were going to do, and they both said they had agreed with these men to shoot one of the Mr. Ashtons. I asked them what it was for, and they said it was up' account o' the Union, the turn-out. I asked them what they must have for it, and they said £10."

Garside, in his confession when in Derby gaol, said, "I asked what money it was the job was to be done for, and whether Mr. Ashton was to be robbed of it; and Joseph told me he was employed by the spinners' Union at Ashton, and he was to have £10 for it, and he said he and the Union men had been over the ground the day before and settled how to proceed." Mr. James Ashton, the brother of the murdered young man, said, "I had discharged one man previously to the 3rd of January for being in this Union."

when fairly taken were as contended for by the masters, or as alleged by the men.

5. That apart from the error in their calculations, there is no reason for blaming the men for the attempt to obtain higher wages, or for the combination to obtain them.

6. That there is no ground for blaming the masters for the reduction of wages, or for their acting in combination or concert upon the matter, the result having proved that the state of the labour market justified the reduction.

7. That the men individually committed great wrong in the outrages that were committed and attempted against the masters, and the intimidation exercised against their fellow workmen who differed from them in the course of action they thought fit to pursue.

8. That the Union of the men is not free from suspicion of complicity with the worst of these outrages.

9. That the abstract right or wrong of the struggle is not, however, to be judged by the misconduct of the individuals who were personally or officially concerned in it.

10. That there is nothing in the struggle to show that a combination of labourers, however extensive, is permanently able to obtain terms from capitalists which the state of the labour market would not justify.

AN ACCOUNT
OF
SHIPWRIGHTS' TRADES' SOCIETIES,
IN
LIVERPOOL, THE TYNE, AND OTHER PORTS,

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADE SOCIETIES,

By PHILIP H. RATHBONE.

LIVERPOOL SHIPWRIGHTS.

[Materials:—Poll Books of 1790; Committee of House of Commons; Artisans and Machinery; Minutes of Masters' Association for 1823-24; Sundry Documents relating to ditto; Evidence of Master Shipwrights before Liverpool Committee; Evidence of Secretary of Operative Shipwright Association; &c., &c., &c.]

THE operative shipwrights of Liverpool have for many years (with short intervals of disorganization) formed one of the most compact trade societies in the kingdom, and the master shipbuilders have maintained a counter association for probably an equal period. The first deed of incorporation which is preserved among the records of the latter is dated 1812, but this probably is merely a restatement of the principles upon which the Association was originally founded, such as was repeated in 1823, and again in 1834. Indeed this Association appears to have preserved more of the features of the ancient guild than any other of which I am aware, and probably dates from a much earlier period than any of its existing records. I have been able to procure no documentary evidence of the existence of the Shipwrights' Union so early, but some whose experience extends over considerably more than half a century, say, that the Shipwrights' Society has been a well-known body as long as they can remember. I have been told by a representative of one of the oldest shipbuilding firms of the town, that the power of the society was very much consolidated by the protection it afforded against the pressgang in the French war. On one occasion only was there an attempt made to impress a member of the body. This attempt was not, however, successful; a loaded cannon was placed opposite the door of the rendezvous, and the man was demanded and given up. This cannon seems to have figured upon more than one occasion, and a tradition exists that in 1804 the then mayor, Mr. Aspinall, when driving in the town, met a large body of the shipwrights with their cannon.

He leapt out, seized the ringleader, placed him in the mayor's coach, and drove off with him to the Bridewell before any of the men had time to recover their senses. Another circumstance which gave the society considerable power was the fact that the shipwrights were all freemen, and their influence was necessary to the success of a candidate. In the evidence before the committee of the House of Commons, 1824, it is mentioned that it was customary for both sides to send down large donations to the Union when there appeared to be a probability of an election. (At that time also the mayor was elected by the town at large.)

In 1790, when the two political parties came to an agreement to elect their old members, the shipwrights bent upon having a contest, set up their own man, and carried him against both combined. ' At the beginning of this century, Liverpool was not only remarkable for the beauty of her ships, but was known as being one of the best and cheapest repairing ports in the world; and American captains would (I am told by one of the oldest American merchants) defer any repairs they could in order to have them done on this side of the Atlantic. Sometimes a lower freight would be taken to Liverpool than to another port, in order that the ship might come here to be coppered. This, it is needless to say, has ceased to be the case for many years. The shipwrights, therefore, were then relatively a much more important body in the town than they are now, and bore a much larger proportion to the number of shipwrights of the United Kingdom. There were also several conditions peculiar to the trade (most of which still exist), which contributed to make the Shipwrights' Society one of the most powerful in the kingdom.

Ships were chiefly built by apprentices, and journeymen were only employed upon old work in the public graving docks. Another point to be remembered is, that two-thirds of the repairs are very often paid by the underwriters, and that it is actually sometimes the shipowner's interest to increase his bill, in order that it may amount to 3 per cent. upon the value of his vessel. The wages for repairs were paid by the merchants or owners direct, and not by the master shipwrights. The masters were therefore fond of chiefly relying upon apprentices, and to such an extent was this carried that the merchants joined with the men in a recommendation (which practically amounted to an order) that only one apprentice should be employed to every three journeymen in old work. There appears, however, to have been no limit to apprentices upon new work, except in the case of two firms, who, for some unexplained reason, were limited to five each. In other ways the society, in its palmy days, was extremely peremptory. It was ruled by an executive committee of twenty-one, formed upon the principle of strict rotation. The president and secretary were, however, elected, and the latter appears to have had a most singular power of altering the laws of the society at his own discretion.

The society was nominally a mere benefit club, to which, in 1824, the monthly subscription was 1*s.* 3*d.*, and in that year the actual balance was upwards of £2,200, which sum it was proposed to lay

out in almshouses for old members. This intention was afterwards carried out. The shipwrights still possess nineteen almshouses beneath their meeting hall in Bond Street. In 1824 it was denied by the delegates of the club, before the Committee of the House of Commons, that the funds were ever used for trade purposes, and owing to the complete system of intimidation established, there were few strikes of long duration. In their own yards the employers were enabled to hold their own, as the ships were chiefly built by apprentices, whom the masters could, and did put in prison, on the slightest appearance of insubordination. On the other hand, ships' repairs would not wait, and a very short turn-out brought matters to a crisis, as the captain or owner insisted upon the work being finished, and would not enter into the quarrels of master shipwrights and their men.

The men seem to have been much more amenable in the matter of wages than in other ways, because these were paid by the merchant direct, who could threaten, if wages were too high, to send his ships then and there to another of the outports, where they were considerably lower. In other ways, the club appears to have possessed a power which was often exercised with a violence with which the police were utterly unable to cope. Even that august authority the mayor, seems upon one occasion to have quailed before them, although there is conflicting evidence upon this point; but one thing is clear, viz., that the town was sometimes completely in their hands. The masters asserted before Mr. Hume's committee, that they could not dismiss a man for drunkenness or slovenly work, and that their only redress was to complain to the club, who sometimes punished the delinquent by drilling him. Drilling consisted in obliging a man to be out of work for a certain number of days. One man was fined a guinea by the club, for doing too much work in one day. In 1817 daywork was introduced, and piecework prohibited; the reason given being, that otherwise the old men would suffer. It appeared in evidence, however, that one effect was to throw the old men often entirely out of employ, as no man would pay the same wages for an old man as for a young one, when he could get the latter. One shipbuilder was ruined in resisting the club, and by the attempt to bring shipwrights from a distance, and the men were terribly ill-treated. He had to call his creditors together, and they induced him to make a public apology to the men in the papers (it is fair to say, that under great provocation, he had on one occasion shown some want of temper). He never afterwards ventured to oppose his men in anything. No builder was allowed to contract (or lump) for work, and the slightest suspicion of such a thing caused the men to strike. The appointment of foremen was also a constant source of disagreement. One man (Mr. Wilson), who being objected to by the men, had to leave his place, undertook the repairs of a schooner, with eight non-society men. Three to four hundred men came down and threw the men and their tools overboard (there were some two and a half feet of water round the vessel), with the

exception of one;—round his body they put slings, and hooked the main topsail halyards to the slings; they then took part of a hand-pump to beat the slings together upon his body, and beat him also upon the head with the same instrument most severely. Inshore of the schooner upon which the men were engaged, a flat was lying, the men got her fore-halyards, and hooked them also to the slings, they then having hoisted the man a certain height off the deck, let go the schooner's topsail halyards, and swung him right across the flat's deck, when he fell into the next yard. They then returned on board, and gave Mr. Wilson a most severe beating, they cut him most unmercifully, and endeavoured to throw him down into the vessel's hold. While he was attempting to get ashore from the schooner, they went with a rush behind him, and he was nearly precipitated into the flat's hold, but most fortunately he got ashore covered with blood and dreadfully wounded, when they took no more notice of him. Warrants were out against six of the men, but the president of the club met Mr. Wilson, and made an offer that if he would get the warrants withdrawn, the club would allow men to work for him, either as master or foreman. As his livelihood, very possibly his life, depended upon his acceptance of this offer, he was strongly advised by his friends not to reject it, and his family being large, he accepted it. On another occasion, a gang of men not belonging to the town were smeared over with tar, put into a cart, and carted some miles out of town, then turned out, and recommended not to return.

I am rather led to infer that soon after the peace the men's association became somewhat disorganized for some years, consequently the masters' association also, but about this period I have not been able to procure any precise information. I think it probable, however, that much of the violence which appears to have prevailed for a few years previous to 1824 was caused by the efforts of leaders of unions to recover the power they had been enabled to wield in the days of the old pressgang. On the 16th October, 1823, the master shipwrights met, and reorganized their association. In order probably to keep on the safe side of the Combination Laws their object was defined to be "the prosecution of felons, and prevention of felonies," which was the object stated in the deed of 1812.

Their action was called for within a month, though not against the shipwrights, but against the ship-sawyers, who appear to have been a considerably worse body than the former. Several meetings appear to have been held, to take measures for the protection of non-union sawyers, and legal proceedings were authorized to be taken at the expense of the Association, in cases where certain sawyers had been assaulted. In December we find one firm authorizing the payment of 18*s*. per week, to one of their sawyers disabled from work by an assault. Under date of 18th December, we find this resolution,—"Resolved that a temperate, but at the same time a firm and determined communication be forthwith made to the operative shipwrights generally, that any journeyman shipwright who may enter the employment of any individual not having a regular

establishment in the trade, shall be, in the estimation of the master shipwrights, held as totally disqualified to serve them; that legitimate connexion between those engaged in the same profession being thus dissolved, such men need never calculate on receiving the slightest encouragement or employment whatever, from any house regularly established in the trade."

This resolution was apparently directed against establishments which afterwards became very common, under the name of "pitchpot yards," *i.e.*, yards belonging to masters who only repaired ships and did not build them, and who, therefore, in consequence of the graving docks being open to all, required very small regular establishments.

On February 28th, eight master shipwrights were appointed a deputation to give evidence before the House of Commons. About the end of March, apparently, the president and secretary of the Journeymen Shipwrights' Club proposed to meet the members of the Master Shipwrights' Association, for the purpose of mutual explanation; and accordingly, a special meeting of the latter body was called, to which each member was requested to "come prepared with a catalogue in detail of such complaints as can be justly offered to the present rules and modes of acting pursued by the journeymen shipwrights." In the end, four master shipwrights were appointed to lay their views before the Journeymen's Club, which they did in a long statement, which was replied to on the part of the Operatives' Club, who again were answered by the masters. The importance of these documents, as showing the relations between the two associations, will justify our bestowing some attention on them. The first statement of the masters commences thus:—

"Liverpool, *May* 1*st*, 1824.

"As the present interview is undertaken on the principles of effecting mutual good, and for the express purpose of establishing a correct understanding between individuals whose interests are one and the same, it cannot for a moment be doubted but that the result must be an increase of comfort and happiness in their vocation.

"The following propositions are therefore confidently submitted by the master shipwrights of the port of Liverpool to the consideration of the journeymen; and as the removal of the existing evils now pointed out rests entirely with the latter, it becomes the duty of the better informed individuals, of which they are constituted, to state to their less intelligent fellow-workmen the propriety of a prompt adoption of the sound principles of fidelity and justice in the prosecution of their valuable labour, rather than to attempt to persevere in a system not recognised or practised in any other port in the kingdom,—a system founded in injustice, and subversive of that good order which so eminently distinguishes the commercial and trading community of this nation, and which is alike injurious to the interests and comfort of the masters and journeymen shipwrights of this port, and of those valued friends to each—the shipowners, by whom *both* are sustained.

"In thus briefly premising the statement of grievances about to be

given, it would be uncandid not to explain to the journeymen shipwrights that their erroneous proceedings (as a club or society) have excited observation in a high department; that the means of effectual redress have been distinctly pointed out and in a degree conferred; but as the master shipwrights feel conscious that a large proportion of the journeymen consists of moral and well-informed men, whose influence with those unhappy individuals of a contrary description (of whom not a few are interspersed amongst them), if judiciously and conscientiously exerted, would, without any other interference, accomplish the re-establishment of a correct and satisfactory performance of the duties they have in their respectable station of life to fulfil,—the master shipwrights again express themselves confident that the present interview will result in an increase of happiness to every interested party, by pacifically effecting a discontinuance of those obnoxious rules and regulations adopted by the journeymen shipwrights of Liverpool within the last few years—regulations which they must, on very slight reflection, be aware are inadmissible in any well-ordered trade, and which operate injuriously to the employers, whilst the conceived advantage to the employed is groundless and imaginary."

The first complaint the master shipwrights offer is—that a rule exists, or an understanding is established, amongst the society of journeymen, that any individual amongst them who may be convicted of exceeding a specific extent of caulking or other work prescribed by the club, is subjected to a penalty or some other punishment—though he can, with comfort to himself, do more than his less industrious fellow-workmen.

This rule or understanding the masters condemn, in severe but not unkindly terms.

The next complaint is want of attention to the bell, which, it appears, rang for the commencement of labour. The masters, reasonably enough, complain that "the ten, but much oftener fifteen or twenty minutes, thus taken by each man, when multiplied by the number so transgressing, will exhibit an aggregate daily loss of serious importance to their employers, without yielding any real benefit to the journeymen, who must, on the contrary, feel much more self-approbation at the conclusion of their day's labour, in the sterling conviction of having done justice to the parties by whom they have been employed, than in returning to their several homes impressed with the uncomfortable sense of not having honestly satisfied their employers."

The document next complains of the existence of a rule requiring ten men to be employed, invariably, upon the loading of blocks for graving dock purposes, which, "though in very particular cases it may not be too many, yet, generally speaking, is imposing another objectionable tax upon the shipowner."

The next complaint is the "unjust prohibition of any shipwrights not connected with the club from working with its members." After stating that they (the masters) have been strongly urged to introduce shipwrights from other ports, they go on to say: "It only remains for the master shipwrights to assure the journeymen that,

provided the work of the port can be satisfactorily accomplished by the resident shipwrights, they are (as residents) entitled to a marked preference, and which preference, under such circumstances, will at all times be given. It must be, however, always taken for granted that the sailing carpenter of any ship under repair should work at the vessel whenever his master may think proper to direct him."

The next complaint is of interference with the right of discharging workmen, the masters remarking, that it is their interest not prematurely to discharge a really competent workman. Lastly, they insist upon their right to select what foremen they please, but "should just ground of complaint be given by any such foreman, let it be candidly stated to the master employing him, and it shall have due attention, and the cause of it be redressed."

Finally, after some general remarks the memorial goes on to say:

"In concluding the present interview, the master shipwrights profess themselves (and hope they will on every occasion be found) not unreasonable men. They suggest the propriety of no further regulation being established amongst the journeymen which may affect the prosecution of the trade, without being in a candid and friendly manner submitted to the masters, who, if the proposition be founded on correct principles, and reasonable in its extent, will in no case withhold their sanction to its adoption:—but, if likely to prove injurious to any of the parties interested, will, with equal candour state their objections, so that such a conclusion may be attained on any point at issue as may be mutually satisfactory. And here it may be again justly observed, that the interest of masters and men is indivisible, and nothing is so much required to make the trade as comfortable and reputable in the port of Liverpool as elsewhere, as mutual confidence, and a total rejection of that mistaken policy which encourages the notion that their interests are opposed to each other."

To this statement of grievances, the shipwrights replied by the following document:—*

"Liverpool, 1824.

"At a numerous and respectable meeting which took place on Tuesday, the 16th of June, your proposals were read up to the meeting and approved of, with a few exceptions, it being always our wish that a good understanding should exist between the master shipwrights and the journeymen.

"Gentlemen,—The Society of Shipwrights has been founded on upright and honest principles. Information has been given to you entirely without foundation. Before the formation of our society, the oppression of our brothers was great, though you invited strangers to come and take the bread we so justly had a right to, which drove our families to distress and poverty.

"A number of our grievances your recollection cannot forget, and

* It has not been thought necessary in the following document to preserve the orthography of the original; but (except in one or two cases where a slight change seemed necessary to make it intelligible) it has in other respects been unaltered.

in consequence of which we were obliged to form ourselves together to break through tyranny and oppression. It has been from the commencement of our society that we wished you to become friendly amongst us, although we had sent circulars requesting the favour of your company to dine with us on our annual day, with a hope to form friendship amongst you, which would have been to the advantage of both parties; but instead of that, it has gone forth to the world that we were more like assassins than reasonable beings. Nevertheless, it is the wish of our society that all grievances should die away, and that we should become as masters and men ought to be.

"1. Your first complaint is that we have a rule amongst us that if a man do more caulking than another, he is under a penalty or punishment, though he can with comfort to himself do more than his less industrious fellow-workman. We deny that there is such a rule amongst us. We candidly inform you that lumping, some years ago, became so general amongst the masters, and that under a cloak, that few men were employed at a job. It was thought necessary to guard against such impositions as well for the master as the men. If our employers undermined each other, so that they could not live by the profits, is it reasonable to think they ought to have it out of the man? It is well known to us and to you also that there has been instances of vessels in the graving dock that have wanted caulking, when we have not been allowed time to do the vessel nor the merchant justice, to accomplish other purposes, well known to you and us. It is the wish of our society that a fair day's work of all description should be done by each individual, agreeable to your request, only that time be allowed to do justice.

"2. Your next objection is the alleged inattention to the bell. It is the wish of the journeymen shipwrights that the bell should be attended to in reason, and for the bell to ring at six o'clock in the evening for leaving off. It shall be our study to accomplish that point as soon as possible.

"3. Your next complaint is that six men are sufficient to load block in the room of ten.

"We will state the necessity of such a rule. Formerly, when blocks were loaded by any number of men and at any period, foremen would wait for a certain set of men to finish a job; the morning following those men were sent to load and lay the blocks, when other men perhaps have been walking about a week or a fortnight, and at the same time those men had, as members of our society, an equal right to all privileges belonging to the trade. It is your wish that only six men should be employed to load blocks. We wish that to be a grievance no longer; only that ten hands should be shipped in the afternoon of regulating the graving docks by the master shipwright or foreman; that is six to load blocks on regulating day; the remaining four to join them to lay the blocks next morning and get the vessel in graving dock, &c.

"The journeymen shipwrights should wish, if possible, always the blocks to be loaded the evening before going into the graving dock,

as the expense is so trifling, and the dirtiness of the job laying them next morning, considering the whole, not worth mentioning.

"4. Another objection you have stated, of the propriety and impropriety of not working with the sailing carpenters of ships. You are all aware of its proceedings without much explanation. From our commencement up to a late period you have watched us with an eye of suspicion, and very probably we have done the same to you. Our formation and system was and is, to live and let live. It has been stated and circulated through the United Kingdom that it is the enormous wages we receive that causes a decrease in the shipping interest of this port. It is well known such statements are false. Is not the labourer worthy of his hire? Our wages at present are 4*s.* 6*d.* per day; merchants, masters, and captains have expressed their sentiments, that the wages are not enough to meet all demands of a family, even if they got their full wages; master shipwrights seriously reflecting on loss of time between neap, rainy weather, loss and wear of tools, &c., may venture to say, on an average 3*s.* 6*d.* per day would be the extent of wages: in Chester 3*s.* 6*d.* per day, in the North 4*s.*, and in different parts of Ireland 4*s.* 6*d.* per day, rents and provisions a good deal lower. But to return to the subject. We have no objections against sailing carpenters of ships who can produce a seven years' indenture to work any part of the vessel, providing they remain at their own respective vessels; the grievance may be discussed on by our delegates. We agree with you in respect of an understanding between both parties for the future good, that at the rise and fall of wages there should be ten days' notice given by each party, and five master shipwrights and five journeymen appointed to meet each other, and during that period to have a fair understanding between the parties, so that we may not run away with mistaken ideas.

"Another complaint you state, that if a man be sent from a job, we one and all break off work. You never knew an instance of a man being discharged for drunkenness and inattention that we did so; and if it was so, it was by some mistaken notions of a few individuals, and not known to the body.

"We cannot help remarking your candid sentiments, in allowing you to elect such foremen over us that would give general satisfaction. We never did nor wish to take that prerogative from you; we wish the master shipwrights to choose any they think proper, out of the society, of decent character, as would answer as foreman, whether he served his time in town or not will be agreeable.

"There is one thing that we most earnestly crave from you, that we may leave off at five o'clock on Saturday afternoon and, as formerly, a man from each ship or vessel, to take each shipwright's time (only on the morning of Saturday), and deliver such time into the office to be under the inspection of the master or foreman, to see all correct and to allow that individual time in the afternoon to get the bill signed and paid at the ship; and if in summer for each man to be paid after the hour of leaving off and in winter to go round and

give each man his wages at his work at the ship, then we can go straight home with our money which will prove a great advantage to our families, the steadiest man can seldom leave a pay-table before it has cost him from one to two shillings; and I am sorry to say some a great deal more, which injures the constitution and breaks the Sabbath. The greatest evil that belongs to us is masters and foremen keeping public-houses; there is a demand that cannot be resisted, for our trade is very fluctuating; those that spend most must be most employed, that in time it almost makes a drunkard of a steady man; the thing speaks for itself, that no foreman should keep a public-house; if he did, he ought to resign either one or the other; and we hope our answer will not be found unreasonable in any of our wishes.

"The journeymen shipwrights have been for a number of years under the control of men not knowing the practical part of the business, such as some masters, captains, mates and others, and most of the quarrels that have arisen between you and us have been occasioned by them. We earnestly wish that those grievances be redressed as in other regular sea-ports, to be ruled by regular masters and foremen, and that all apprentices that has and may come out of their apprenticeship, such as masters' sons and relatives, that they become members of our society, as it is the only way to effect a union amongst us, and bring all things to a fair understanding between you and us.

"When a vessel is under repairs we hope not to be under the control of captains or mates, but to be entirely under the direction of masters or foremen; any dispute arising, the masters and journeymen are most proper to settle it.

"Respecting introducing strangers into the town, this we would readily comply with, if there were not so many apprentices out of their time every year. We think there are quite sufficient in the town to accomplish the work of it. At present the port is well stocked with shipwrights.

"That one apprentice to three journeymen at old work, as usual, except at capstans heads and making of spars, &c.,—then one man and one apprentice, so that he may learn his business.

"Likewise days and quarters, from five to seven o'clock, in yard and graving dock, as usual, when required.

"If it be agreeable to the master shipwrights, we intend to send a memorial to the licensed magistrate respecting foremen keeping public-houses; we would take it as a favour of any of you that would choose to have the goodness to sign it."

The master shipwrights in their reply, dated July 1st, express their satisfaction at the laudable disposition shown to remove every reasonable cause of complaint; they "do not venture a doubt that in whatever structure *charity* and *benevolence* compose the foundation, '*uprightness*' and '*honour*' are sure to constitute a part of the fabric." They only lament that "such an institution should have received alloy by its adoption of anything uncongenial to the avowed prin-

ciples of its first formation." They deny that "they at any time were oppressive;" or that they at any time *capriciously* invited strangers to come and cause "distress and poverty" to the families of the Liverpool journeymen. "It is perfectly unnecessary to remind the journeymen that on no occasion have *strangers* been solicited to become their substitutes, but during those unhappy periods when the resident journeymen have, either from one motive or another, declined to do what the masters conceived was reasonable; and when misunderstandings of this nature take place, the journeymen cannot but concur that no other remedy is open to the masters, but by all justifiable means to procure workmen on such terms as they know the trade will warrant."

After stating that even this has been done only by individuals, and not by the Association as a body, the reply goes on to say that merely being a resident shipwright could give a man no right to his bread unless he earned it, but that so long as there was a sufficient number of resident shipwrights able and willing to do the work of the town there was no wish to encourage others. They add that—

"The master shipwrights, in confirmation of their authority for stating that an apportionment of labour has been prescribed by the society of journeymen for the government of its members, have only to state with that confidence which truth at all times inspires, that penalties have been imposed upon individuals convicted of breaches of this obnoxious understanding."

The memorial then expresses the unqualified determination of the masters generally to avoid undertaking work by contract. This being clearly understood must remove any impression from minds of the journeymen that more is at any time required than a just and reasonable day's work.

After discussing the number of men requisite to lay blocks, the reply complains of the condition of seven years' apprenticeship required of the ship's carpenter before he is to be allowed to work.

"In adverting to the intimation from the journeymen that it has been stated and circulated throughout the United Kingdom that the excessive wages paid in Liverpool had caused a decrease of work in the port, the master shipwrights beg distinctly to state that they have experienced individual loss, from the ascertained fact of numerous vessels having left the port of Liverpool and gone elsewhere for the purpose of receiving necessary repairs; but the rate of wages has not been the sole cause; the various rules and regulations adopted by the journeymen, as a society, which the owners of such vessels justly held detrimental to their interest, have been the avowed reason why they have submitted to the expense and inconvenience of removing their ships."

The reply then goes on to express approbation of the proposition of a specific notice being given in case of alteration of wages, &c., and the master shipwrights pledge themselves, as far as they are concerned, to give such notice. The Association then re-asserts the right of its members to choose what foremen they think fit,

whether they belong to the Shipwrights' Club or not, and shows conclusively the impropriety of the foreman being amenable to an association of the very men whom he is to direct. The reply then goes on to express sympathy with the objection to interference by the captain or agent with a vessel under repairs. The masters refuse to influence apprentices to join the society, "as such young men, having arrived at years of discretion, should be allowed to judge for themselves, without the exercise of either persuasion or compulsion."

The masters admit that at this time there is no necessity for introducing strangers into the town; but "the principle of proscribing strangers, as a prerogative resting in the hands of the journeymen of this port, is of that vital nature, that until the institutions of this happy country are laid prostrate, it can *never* be conceded; to say that the journeymen would *comply* with the admitting strangers to work in the port, provided so many apprentices were not liberated from their servitude annually, is certainly assuming the right of prevention, —a right which does not rest with even the *highest authorities* of the town; and were such a right vested in any town's administration, and on any occasion exercised, the words tyranny and oppression might then be used without the slightest infringement of propriety."

Assent is then expressed to the condition of three men to one apprentice on old work, and also to the rule for overtime. Finally, the masters express their cordial concurrence in the remarks of the men as to payment in public-houses, and also on the shortening of work by one hour on Saturdays; but on the last point, "existing prejudices in interested quarters, that every similar innovation in our trade is necessarily inflicting another wound on the shipping interest, induces the master shipwrights to regret they cannot consistently concede the measure." They hope, however, to satisfy the "interested parties" on this point in time. The majority of masters will be glad to co-operate with the journeymen in any measure which can be with propriety resorted to, for the purpose of suppressing that intemperance in drinking which is so lamentably prevalent in the trade. They fear, however, that memorializing the magistrates as to foremen keeping public-houses would be of little advantage, unless they could be proved to be disorderly houses. The reply concludes thus:—

"The master shipwrights hope, from the very extended explanation they have given of what they know it to be the duty and interest of the journeymen to comply with, that this will be received as final; and at the same time trusting no class of men can feel a stronger disposition than themselves to promote the welfare of the journeymen shipwrights, have in conclusion merely to observe, that it is impossible for them to say more, or to yield any point which has come under consideration; being guided throughout by a strict attention to justice and reason."

I have given very full extracts from these documents because being addressed to the respective associations, and not intended for the perusal of third parties, they are thoroughly genuine expressions of opinion.

They appear to me to be valuable evidence of the understanding

existing between master and man at that time. On July 8th the master shipwrights resolved, in consequence of the journeymen's memorial, "that after the ensuing pay day, no journeymen's wages shall be paid at the houses of any foreman in the trade who may keep a licensed public-house or tavern." The shipwrights as a body have not been considered remarkable for the virtue of temperance, and this action of a trades' society, thirty six years ago, is a curious comment on the common assertion that trade societies help to further intemperance.

An incident tending to illustrate the relations of the masters and men, occurred in November of this year. A new shipbuilding firm was established in the town, and the officers of the Shipwrights' Society waited upon the masters to inquire whether they might work for the new firm, stating they would refuse to work for them if they were not admitted into the Masters' Association. The firm was admitted upon the principal producing regular indentures of apprenticeship. Early in 1825, I find a resolution that no sawyer shall be employed without a written character. About this time a serious dispute seems to have arisen, owing to the journeymen having evinced a disposition to lump, or contract for work, and to refuse to work in the yards. On the 11th of March the shipwrights memorialized the Shipowners' Association for an increase of wages from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, which memorial was handed over to the master shipwrights, to whom it would naturally have been addressed. These latter replied with some tartness that there seemed to be no sufficient reason for such an advance. Matters appear to have been in a very uncomfortable state, for the master shipwrights applied to the Mayor for his advice as to inviting journeymen shipwrights from other parts. The actual chief magistrate, who seems to have possessed considerably more determination than his predecessor, concurred heartily in their proposal, and stated his readiness to call in the military, if necessary, to protect the new comers. A statement was accordingly forwarded to Mr. Huskisson, then member for Liverpool, relating their grievances pretty much in the same order as in the complaint addressed to the men's club, only with considerably increased asperity, and closing with a suggestion that the workmen then being discharged from his Majesty's Dockyard should be recommended to come to Liverpool, as the masters thought that a body of some two hundred might venture to work in the town. It is curious to find that one of the complaints urged is that the workmen refuse to work at new work, except when paid by the piece.

Another charge is the very common, and I fear too well founded one, that the journeymen are apt to take ungenerous advantage of their employers when bound by penalties to fulfil a contract by a certain day. On the 24th of March, the master shipwrights made a proposal to the Shipowners' Association, that they (the master shipwrights) should pay the wages to the men engaged in repairs, charging a slight commission for so doing, and being paid for the job at its conclusion. The shipowners do not seem to have agreed to this.

The shipwrights soon after obtained the increase of wages asked for. This emboldened the sawyers to demand and obtain a similar advance. In July, however, work became slack, and the masters, "feeling desirous of giving employment to more men, resolved that the hours of labour be reduced from one and a quarter days, to one day's work each day." Throughout 1826, matters appear to have been very quiet; but early in 1827, a serious quarrel arose between the two associations. The shipping trade being much depressed in that year, the masters wished to reduce the men from 5*s.* to 4*s.* per day; and on the other hand the men were desirous of meeting the difficulty by insisting upon the employment of six men to one apprentice on old work, instead of the old proportion of three to one. A strike took place in the beginning of April. The masters resolved to advertise for shipwrights at 4*s.* per day; decided preference was to be given to resident shipwrights unconnected with that "obnoxious Association" the shipwrights' benefit club. Application for aid was made to the chief magistrate, in anticipation of excesses and breaches of the peace, "so that strangers disposed to accept employment in the port, might be assured of the most secure and ample protection." Foremen were also assured of aid and protection "as well with reference to their present circumstances, as to any reverse situation in which their allegiance to their present employers might hereafter place them."

Shipwrights coming to work in Liverpool were promised that, should they sustain personal injury from the attacks of the resident journeymen shipwrights, provision should be made for them, their wives and families, out of the funds of the Association.

Members of the Shipbuilders' Association, who were also members of the Journeymen Shipwrights' Society, were desired to transmit in writing their retirement from the latter, and their determination not hereafter to contribute to the funds of that society. And a letter was addressed to Mr. Huskisson requesting him to withdraw his name as an honorary member of it. I find a vote of censure upon one shipbuilder for declaring his intention to act independently, and upon another for irregularity in attending the meetings.

Upon the 20th of April, it was resolved, that no journeymen be engaged, even at the proposed rate of wages, unless they give "the most satisfactory evidence" of "having no longer any connexion (either directly or indirectly) with the Shipwrights' Society as at present constituted."

Then follows a resolution which shows that the masters attribute their difficulties with their men, to some extent, to the political character of the organization. "Resolved that, in the master shipbuilders' establishments situated within the borough, no apprentice be indentured for a period exceeding six and a half years, to prevent as far as possible the increase of freemen in our particular branch of business; and that sons of freemen be uniformly rejected as apprentices." The masters also attempted to get up a rival benefit society to be called the "Artisans' Friend Society," and the Mayor was requested to become the first honorary member of it, though

whether he consented does not appear, nor whether the society was successful or not. A deputation was sent to Greenock to offer work at 4*s.* 6*d.* per day to shipwrights there; and in consequence of threats and breaches of the peace, the Mayor was requested to station soldiers near the graving docks, in which work was being carried on. Nor does it appear that this was at all unnecessary, as upon the 8th of June, an assault having been committed on a member of the Masters' Association, a reward of £20 was offered for the apprehension of the offender. Meanwhile, attempts were being made to accommodate the dispute. The Shipwrights' Society requested an interview, which was refused on the ground that the Masters' Association would no longer recognise the Shipwrights' Society. Upon the 23rd of May, the shipowners proposing to mediate between the masters and journeymen, the former requested that any offer to the journeymen might be previously made known to them, "as the natural parties from whom any negotiation in the matters at issue should proceed," and "since any terms entered into with the journeymen by any parties but the masters themselves, must have the effect of lessening the just authority of the masters over the men."

On the 24th of May, the president of the Journeymen Shipwrights' Society wrote, offering on the part of the journeymen to work at the rate of 4*s.* 6*d.* per day, "provided the master shipwrights would employ six journeymen for every apprentice they might employ at old work." This offer was declined, although, on the 9th of June, the journeymen shipwrights having expressed an earnest desire for a personal interview with the master shipwrights, the latter consented. This appears to have led to negotiations which terminated favourably, for upon the 20th of the same month, I find that the following resolution was adopted:—

The journeymen shipwrights "having subscribed a written declaration as to their future conduct in the prosecution of the work of the port," the masters on their parts undertook "to consider the rate of wages for the present to be 4*s.* 6*d.* per day," on which no advance or reduction should take place without ten days' notice being given. It was further agreed, August 6th, to print the terms which the journeymen shipwrights had subscribed, with the names of the subscribers; the same to be furnished to each shipbuilder's firm in the port.

This seems to have closed the strike generally, but some slight insubordination appears to have been shown afterwards; for on September 13th I find resolutions to the following effect:—

1. Some journeymen shipwrights showing a disposition to break through the terms of the compact between themselves and the masters, a list of these offenders is to be furnished to each firm, and no foreman allowed to employ any one of them, on any account; and

2. Until all the members of the "Artisans' Friend Society" have been employed, no others are to be taken on: strangers (who worked during the disturbance) to be preferred to resident journeymen.

Between this time and 1834 I find nothing remarkable, except the following resolution, dated 1828:—

"The expenses incurred in prosecuting or discharging the appren-

tices, who (contrary to the orders of their masters, members of this society) absented themselves from duty on the 29th of May, shall be borne by the Masters' Association."

A resolution was passed in the same year to renew the deed of association, which expired on the 16th of October. On the 1st of May, 1834, the society was reconstituted, nominally, for the prosecution of felons and prevention of felonies. During the years 1835-6 there seem to have been sundry differences of opinion as to wages, &c., but none of any particular moment, until a question arose as to the journeymen agreeing to some rules which they were not disposed to accept. On the 12th of October, 1836, the following resolution was passed:—

"In consequence of the journeymen shipwrights having refused to sign the regulations recently agreed upon (unless through the Shipwrights' Club)—this information we received from a set of individuals calling themselves a deputation from the body of shipwrights (which we very much doubt)—it was resolved that after this day no journeyman shall be employed until he has obtained a ticket from a committee, consisting of four of the master shipbuilders who shall be chosen to examine the claim of each man, who if he can produce an indenture of seven years' apprenticeship, or a satisfactory certificate that he has served his lawful apprenticeship, or that he has worked for the last five years in Liverpool as an acknowledged journeyman, he shall then be allowed to sign the regulations; and further resolved that the following rules be added to those already printed:—

"'I do hereby declare that I have renounced all connexion with the Liverpool shipwrights' trade club, and agree to withdraw all support either directly or indirectly from any such society.'"

Here we have a counterpart to all intents and purposes of the famous declaration of the building strike of 1860. This resolution was followed up on the 24th of October by the following:—

"That when all the journeymen shall have signed the regulations, books shall be printed containing the name, number, &c., of each man, and copies of each be delivered to each member of this society."

Upon signing these regulations, I am informed that each man received a ticket, a copy of which was shown to me. It contained the man's number, his name, a rough woodcut of two joined hands, and the signature of two masters. This step appears to have had some temporary effect in breaking up the trade clubs; but in July, 1838, information was given to the Masters' Association, by Mr. Thompson, secretary of the "Shipwrights' Sick Club," "that the sick club consists of from 200 to 300 members, and that within the last three months there have been certain steps taken to induce the members of the sick club to join one for trade purposes." On the 24th of January, 1839, the Masters' Association received notice of a rise of wages, from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, which was at once cheerfully acceded to. On the 2nd of April in the same year, it was resolved that a bond should be drawn up, "with a penalty of ten pounds from any member who may sign it, if it may be proved he has taken an apprentice who has left another employ without a written discharge from his late master."

On the 1st of September a meeting of the operative shipwrights was held in their large room, Bond Street, "in order to consider the rules and regulations of the trade as at present amended by the masters, and also to consider the just right of men belonging to Liverpool to employment in preference to strangers, this mode being adopted in all the seaports of Great Britain and Ireland, Liverpool excepted." The speakers at this meeting declared that if the merchants knew their own interest they would go hand in hand with the men against the apprenticeship system, as they asserted the masters charged the same wages for an apprentice who had not been more than a week at the trade as for a regular journeyman. Upon a report of this meeting appearing in the papers, the masters met, and a letter was addressed to the journeymen shipwrights, demanding retractation or proof of this assertion, which was declared to be false. On 12th of November another meeting of the journeymen shipwrights was held in their room in Bond Street to consider the formation of an association, the objects of which would be to protect the trade and to resist all encroachments from interested parties. Amongst other resolutions, one was passed appointing a committee to reply to the calumnies of the masters, and a second recommending the raising of a subscription to defray the expenses of the trial of the shipwrights committed to prison. Another resolution advised that all heartburnings about politics and religion should cease. The speakers also insisted that "What they wanted was preference of employment in the town in which they had served their time; and after that, if there were any employment for strangers, they had no objection to their working in the town." From the allusion to the shipwrights in prison, as well as from a notice issued by the masters, stating that "Several journeyman shipwrights have been by sundry riotous and disorderly individuals obstructed in the execution of their lawful duty, and by threats or violence compelled to relinquish their work," it appears that some disturbances had taken place, owing to shipwrights working who had not served their time in the town. How this affair terminated does not appear, but until 26th of April, 1844,* nothing of any importance seems to have occurred. In that month the present existing association of journeymen shipwrights was established, and soon after negotiations occurred between the two associations upon the question of wages and rules. How these terminated does not distinctly appear. From this time the masters seem to have addressed the secretary upon all occasions when the men struck work upon ship. The first occasion arose out of machine-punched copper being sent down to an American ship, September, 1844. The masters requested that a deputation of journeymen would meet them to discuss the matter with them. How the interview terminated does not appear. On other occasions the alleged breach of the 18th rule between the masters and men was the

* Erroneously stated to be 24th of May, by Mill, in his evidence before the Council in 1850.

subject of complaint. This rule provided "That any man who can produce an indenture or a satisfactory certificate that he has served his lawful apprenticeship of seven years, or who shall already have worked for five years as a journeyman in this port, will be allowed to sign these rules, without which he cannot be employed." The men would not admit men who had served their time out of Liverpool to work. This 18th rule is a constant source of discussion down to the present day. In November I find that the men employed on the repairs of a ship having quarreled with their foremen and struck, were ordered to return to work by the club, and a letter of thanks was addressed in consequence to the secretary.

At a meeting of the Shipbuilders' Association, 19th December, 1845, the Shipbuilders' Association, in consequence of a memorial having been presented to the chairman from a number of journeymen, who stated that they were unable to obtain employment in consequence of the Shipwrights' Club refusing to work with them, a deputation of the whole committee of the journeymen were summoned to meet the masters on the subject, and were then informed that they (the masters) must insist on all men who have duly served a seven years' apprenticeship in any part of the United Kingdom being allowed to work without molestation.

In consequence of the above memorial, the indentures of twenty-two journeymen were examined and found to be correct.

On February 16th, 1846, the following circular was issued:—

"*To the Shipbuilders, Merchants, and Captains of Great Britain.*

"GENTLEMEN,—We beg leave to inform you of a society of shipwrights, called the *National Shipwrights' Friendly Society*. This society consists of men who have served their legal apprenticeship to the trade in all parts of the United Kingdom; and we are compelled to distinguish ourselves from the Liverpool shipwrights, because they will not work with us; and their laws would compel us to work for none but whom they thought proper, not leaving it in the power of shipbuilders, merchants, or captains to employ what workmen they please. Our object in thus uniting ourselves together is to obtain employment for our members, and protect ourselves from the unjust oppression we have hitherto suffered from the Liverpool shipwrights, and to perform any job you may be kind enough to honour us with, independent of them, which, on account of our former scattered position, we were unable to do. All our members are bound to do a fair day's work for the usual wages of the port. Whoever you may please to appoint to the overlooking of your repairs, we pledge ourselves to obey, and do your work with justice to you and honour to ourselves."

I do not know whether it was upon this or the previous occasion that a list of eighty-three names (of men most of whom had served seven years' apprenticeship) was handed in to the masters as belonging to this association.

It will perhaps not be out of place to mention, as a symptom of

the feeling between masters and men, that on the occasion of Prince Albert's laying the first stone of the Sailors' Home in July, 1846, £100 was voted as a present to the journeymen shipwrights, to enable them to get up a procession of the whole trade, "on a handsome scale."

In November, I find the journeymen seeking an interview with the masters in order to complain of the "inefficient manner in which some of the vessels are repaired at this port."

The interview appears to have taken place, but I can find no particulars of the result. In February, 1848, the foremen complained to the masters of compulsion being used to make them join the Shipwrights' Club, and they were advised to form an Association of their own, which from subsequent notices it appears that they did.

In March the question of the 18th rule came up again, and the masters signed a declaration, protesting against the "oppressive and illegal conduct pursued by the journeymen shipwrights of this port, in not allowing men who have duly served their seven years' apprenticeship to the trade to obtain employment, because they do not belong to the shipwrights' trade club." This declaration was apparently agreed upon in consequence of a letter from the National Shipbuilders' Association, thanking the Masters' Association for their patronage, and announcing that the Liverpool Club was disposed to admit some of their members; but they looked upon this rather as an attempt to break up the association than any approach to real liberality. They add: "In conclusion, Gentlemen, we beg to state that, by our connexion with societies in other ports, we are prepared to obtain any reasonable number of men, viz. from thirty to fifty weekly, should circumstances require it. Gentlemen, we again thank you from our hearts, and again express our hope you will not wish us to join the Liverpool Club, but leave us to serve you as workmen not having the fear of being fined for doing justice to our employers." The Liverpool Club determined to carry out their own views, and, in consequence of the disturbed state of the country, it was deemed not wise and prudent to proceed to extremities at that time.

In 1850, a committee was appointed by the Town Council to inquire into the state of shipbuilders in Liverpool. The secretary of the Shipbuilders' Society, who was examined, acknowledged that the club at that time would not admit any shipwrights who had served seven years in other places than Liverpool. There were great complaints, both by masters and men, of the decline of shipbuilding in Liverpool, and of the consequent deterioration of shipwrights, as they did not consider that the same class of workmen could be reared in repairing yards only. The reason alleged for this decline was the constant removals to which the tenants of yards had been subjected. 1857 passed off quietly, except that one of the masters had a dispute with his shipjoiners (not shipwrights), and it was resolved (a list of the names of such men having been given in) not to employ any of the same until the dispute was accommodated, and also that the firm should be assisted by other employers with apprentice-joiners.

In the spring of 1852, a sub-committee was appointed to revise the rules between the masters and men, technically known as the sheet rules. In the correspondence with the Shipwrights' Club various alterations are suggested by the secretary to the Club; but the chief objections appear to have been to the 11th rule:—

"To the rule which you have inserted respecting strangers being allowed to work, I say that no man can prevent them working if they can get employed; but I want to know if you can force me to work with a man that I have conscientious objections to work with? Under this impression I ask you to withdraw the rule."

A meeting was held of masters and men, in the course of which a question was put to the deputation as to the rule prohibiting strangers working in the port. It was answered by one of them, that although the law of the land permitted all who had served seven years' apprenticeship to their trade to get employment in any port, yet he was perfectly justified in refusing to work with them. A question was put to the secretary, whether it was true that he had sent to Dublin for a number of shipwrights. The secretary stated, that owing to the great demand for labour in Liverpool they had received a communication from the shipwrights of Dublin, requesting to be allowed to come to work at this port, and that a certain number of the said men were now working in the wet and graving docks. A question being put to the men relating to the number of feet of caulking which they considered a fair day's work, they stated that from 90 to 120 feet, according to circumstances, was considered a fair day's work. How the matter was ultimately settled will appear by the following document:—

"At a conference between the Shipowners' Association and the Master Shipwrights and Journeymen Shipwrights, it was determined by both masters and men to leave various disputed rules between them to the arbitration of four gentlemen, two to be chosen by the masters and two by the men, together with the chairman of the Shipowners' Association.

"The gentlemen chosen were—

Mr. JOHN LOCKETT, Mr. S. R. GRAVES, } By the Masters.

Mr. J. P. PALMER, Mr. J. A. TOBIN, } By the Men.

and Mr. R. Rankin, as chairman of the Shipowners' Association, who, having met and considered the statements of

Mr. CATO, President, Mr. MILLER, Secretary, } Of the Masters' Association,

Mr. KNUBLY, President, Mr. NEILL, Secretary, } Of the Shipwrights' Association,

who were accompanied by Mr. M'Kay and Mr. Harrison, came to the following Resolutions:—

"Rule 1. That the wages of journeymen throughout the port be 5*s.* per day; and all overtime, between the hours of four o'clock in the morning and eight o'clock at night, be paid at the rate of 9*d.*

per hour; and between the hours of eight o'clock at night and four o'clock in the morning, 1*s.* 3*d.* per hour be paid; in all cases the full hour to be paid for where the quarter has been passed, but for any time under the quarter-hour no charge to be made.

"Rule 2. That for work done at vessels in the river, 1*s.* per day be paid extra.

"Rule 3. That for tide's work, on the beach or grid iron, the wages be 5*s.* per tide; and on the Clarence dry grid iron, 6*s.* per day when dry, otherwise 5*s.* per tide. The tide means, in the Clarence dry grid iron, from tide leaving vessels until two hours before high water.

"Rule 4. That for vessels stranded beyond the Rock Perch, the wages be 6*s.* per tide, and the men be provided with victuals.

"Rule 5. That for unshoring, getting bilge shores and caps to the yard, each man to receive half a day's pay.

"Rule 6. That each man actually employed in coating vessels in the graving dock be paid 6*d.* extra for each vessel, and on the grid irons, 1*s.*

"Rule 7. That all wages incurred on Sundays, Christmas Day, and Good Friday be charged double.

"Rule 8. That payment of wages shall commence immediately after five o'clock in the summer, and after dark in the winter, at the office of the master; and on no consideration whatever are the men to be paid in the public-house.

"Rule 9. That a day's work shall be from six in the morning until six at night, between the 1st of March and the 10th of October, both inclusive; and at other periods of the year (except December and January) from daylight to dark; and half an hour shall be allowed for breakfast, and an hour and a half for dinner, from the 1st of March to the 10th of October, both inclusive; and half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner, from the 10th of October to the 1st of March, excepting the months of December and January, when the day's work is to commence at eight o'clock, the men breakfasting previously.

"Rule 10. That the number of hands employed for shoring vessels in the graving dock be six for vessels not exceeding 150 tons; eight from 150 tons to 300 tons; ten, from 300 tons to 800 tons; twelve, from 800 tons to 1,300 tons; fourteen, from 1,300 tons to 1,800 tons; and sixteen, for all above.

"Rule 11. That in all cases in which the docking and shoring of a ship is commenced and completed out of the regular working hours of the day, the men shall be entitled to one and a half day's pay; but when the said docking and shoring breaks into the regular working hours of the day, the men to be paid according to Rule 1.

"Rule 12. That any man who can produce an indenture or a satisfactory certificate that he has served seven years to the trade in any port of the United Kingdom, shall be allowed to work in this port for any master who may engage him.

"Rule 13. That the number of apprentices employed shall not exceed the proportion of one to three journeymen.

"Rule 14. That no man shall in any way be restricted as to the amount of caulking or other work which he shall accomplish during the day; but in all cases the principle of 'a fair day's work for a fair day's wages' be faithfully and honourably carried out.

"Rule 15. When a ship is regulated for, and, by some unforeseen circumstance, is prevented going into the graving dock, the men in attendance are to be paid for their lost time.

"Rule 16. That it be fully understood that the above rules apply to the graving and wet docks only, and not to the ship, boat-building and repairing yards, except Rules No. 1, 7, 8, 9, 12, and 14, which apply to all.

"JOHN LOCKETT, *Chairman.*

"And the Shipbuilders' Association hereby give notice, that the above Rules and Regulations will be strictly adhered to on and after December 1st, 1852.

"PETER CATO, *President.*
"W. C. MILLER, *Secretary.*"

It is very questionable whether the men ever adhered to the 12th rule; at any rate, if they did, there is no doubt that they ceased to do so.

Some complaints were made, as often had been done before, that apprentices left their masters in many cases, not having been duly indentured, and it was resolved, "that no employer should take an apprentice from any establishment unless a note of his time be produced at the time of his application." In the next year I find that besides the three associations connected with the shipwrights, namely, masters, foremen, and journeymens' associations, there was a fourth, viz., an apprentices' association, of which the only trace is a notice to the masters of a wish on their part for an advance of allowances. The want of shipwrights was felt in the spring of 1853, and the shipowners' society communicated the following resolution to the Master Shipwrights' Association.

"Resolved unanimously,—That in the opinion of this meeting there are not sufficient shipwrights in this port for the work of the port, and that it is highly expedient that a number of shipwrights should be imported from other ports. That it is strongly recommended by the master shipwrights, to import strangers, and to employ them in conjunction with the local shipwrights, on the same terms, so long as they are not interfered with in their work by the local shipwrights, but whenever that interference takes place, then to employ the strangers exclusively."

I have not any documents relating to Master Shipwrights' Associations later than 1853, excepting a letter in 1859 from the Shipowners' Association suggesting a reduction of wages. In 1856, an attempt was made to consolidate the shipwrights' unions of different ports of the country, and a meeting was held at the Belvidere Tavern, Islington, London, 23 to 27 June inclusive, at which were present representatives from the following ports.

No. of Delegates.	Name of Port.	Names of Representatives.	No. in Society.
6	London	T. Marr, H. Frederick, H. Powell, Jas. Ayles, T. Fiddes	2,246
2	Liverpool	Wm. Neill, Mich. Lynch	1,790
2	Sunderland	George Gamsby, John Burn	1,170
3	South Shields	G. Dempster, J. Bell, J. Ridley	600
1	Monkwearmouth	W. Robson	600
2	Glasgow and Dumbarton	Edw. Campbell, James Guthrie	700
3	Newcastle	J. Ridley, H. Blair, J. Teasdale	350
2	Hull	Adam Lyons, James Plummer	438
1	Hylton	Ralph Kirtley	286
2	Dundee	Robert Bell, John M'Dougall	305
2	North Shields	Wm. Campbell, Thos. Ridley	230
2	Hartlepool	Henry Richardson, — Carter	208
1	Whitby	George Franks, jun.	167
1	Whitehaven & Harrington	Thomas Mageen	180
1	Howden	Thomas Barrett	126
	Blyth		
1	Workington	James Donaghy	125
1	Dublin	James Bourke	108
1	Cardiff	William Griffith	104
1	Stockton	William Davison	100
1	Swansea	John Crole	100
1	Middlesboro'	Edward Hutton	82
1	Northwich	Thomas Molyneux	51
1	Maryport	Borthwick Dobie	112
1	Gloucester	John Hipwood	47
1	Runcorn	Robert Royle	60
1	Ipswich	Richard Hill	45
1	Goole	Thomas Readshaw	40
1	Great Grimsby	John Archer	34
4	Newport (Mon.)	Thomas Mock	85
2	Belfast	Nathaniel Robinson, — Rankin	152
3	Greenock	Geo. Parker, John M'Dougall, E. Boyce	650
	Perth		40
2	Bristol	S. Drake, D. Bird	360
	Aberdeen		80
54		Total number of Members represented	11,766

At this meeting the following resolutions were agreed to among others:—

"1. That this society be called the 'United Kingdom Amalgamated Society of Shipwrights.'

"2. That the object of this Union be to afford protection to its members, and to introduce into our trade such ameliorations as the increasing intelligence of the age demands.

"9. That the journeymen shipwrights of Scotland be accepted as a portion of the Amalgamated Society; also those persons who may, during the ensuing five years, complete their apprenticeship; but from and after the 1st of January, 1856, it will be an *indispensable qualification* for all persons intending to become members of this Society to serve a legal apprenticeship of *seven years*.

"14. That the system of journeymen receiving footings from apprentices is highly reprehensible, and that the system of introducing adults as apprentices should for the future be discontinued.

"17. That it is the opinion of this meeting that the members of every port in connexion with the Amalgamated Society of Shipwrights of the United Kingdom, *shall use every possible means in their power to keep their members in their own port, so as to prevent a greater supply of labour being introduced into any port than the market demands*, and by so doing it will create a feeling of reciprocity, which the Amalgamated Society so earnestly desires.

"22. *That it is the opinion of this meeting that any attempt of the Legislature to establish arbitration courts, cannot fail to be productive of injurious consequences to the shipwrights of the United Kingdom.*"

The whole of the proceedings were published in a small pamphlet, together with some extracts from "Rules and Regulations of the Glasgow Shipwrights' Society, instituted 1st March, 1853," which, it may be supposed, were thought worthy of adoption or imitation, among which were the following:—

"Article 34. Expulsion from Society for feigning sick, or getting to ill-health from intemperance.

"Article 36. Expulsion for theft, especially of tools, or other felonious conduct.

"Article 37. Shipwrecked members to be supplied with tools to the value of two pounds.

"Article 38. *Any members of this Society employed at ship-carpenter's work, having joiners or any others than shipwrights with them as assistants at said work, must discontinue the same on receiving notice from the secretary to that effect, or be liable to be fined or expelled at the discretion of the Society.*"

"Article 39. *No infringement* of existing privileges *must be tolerated*, nor reduction of wages accepted by any member of this Society, without a decision of the Society to that effect.

"Article 40. In case of dispute with masters, any member not acting in conformity with the resolutions passed at a general meeting of the members, may be expelled from the Society.

"Article 41. Expelled members forfeit benefits and contributions." *

The Liverpool Club, however, did not long remain in connexion with this Association, but severed from them on the ground that they allowed members of their body, whose work was slack in other parts, to come, in search of work, to Liverpool.

With regard to the present condition of the associations, the Liverpool Committee on Trades' Societies examined two delegates of the Shipwrights' Committee and one of the employers, whose answers were given in the presence and under the correction of a representative of the Shipwrights' Association. According to the evidence of the Shipwrights' Association, the law requiring a man to serve seven years' apprenticeship in Liverpool was still (27th February, 1860) in force. "We don't allow our men to work with men from other towns, unless they have served seven years in this town."

* The italics in the extracts are in the original pamphlet.

The advantages were stated to be:—"Men being associated together, have a check upon each other; they won't allow bad work. We consider it part of the duty of members to prevent each other slimming work, when, if the men were not associated, this (preventing bad work) could not be done. In our trade a man lives all his life in the town where he serves his time, except when he goes to sea. We have fines for swearing, drinking, &c.; in such cases we have an unwritten law which is generally observed. We fine as occasion arises. If a man is convicted of felony, he expels himself, but the Society may soften the sentence. We cannot fine a man unless there is a printed rule, but we can reduce the fine." As to wages, the following evidence was given:—"We suppose all to perform the same work, and be worth the same wage. We should not object to a man getting more, but should ask equal wages to him. We did not ask for higher wages during the time of high wages about four years ago, but the masters bid against each other for our labour. One man was given higher wages, and of course we considered we were equally worth the same, but we never asked for higher wages until they had already been given. We have been much misrepresented in that respect. We did not ride in cabs and spring-carts for our own convenience, but for that of our masters. Often, payment for overtime was spoken of as part of our ordinary daily wage. On the *Arctic* we worked till ten o'clock at night, and were at work at four again in the morning, and of course got higher wages in consequence.

"Wages always have been advanced without our asking it. That is, our masters ask us to work overtime, and of course pay us for that. I don't remember getting more than 7*s.* for ten hours, but we have worked very long hours.

"At old work we only allow one apprentice to three men, but in a building yard there is no such limit. In this town there is very little wooden shipbuilding; much less than formerly. There is no proper ground, it is taken for docks.

"We have never had any turn-outs for many years; it has never come under my notice that a non-society man has come to work with us. Our apprenticeship system is not kept up in its integrity quite. Men serve seven years, but have no indentures to show. They get a note from their employers to say they have served seven years. Ships are almost entirely built by apprentices.

"There is a trade fund and benefit society, but the funds are distinct; there are about 340 in the benefit society, and 1,700 in the trade. None but members of the trade society are admitted to the benefit society.

"We don't allow piecework or lumping, because some parties would get the largest portion of the work, and others would get none.

"We were connected with the Shipping Trade Association of this town, but have found it better to be entirely independent."

The evidence of the employer is as follows:—"We employ from 100 to 300, society men entirely; there are two or three who employ

exclusively non-society men. As long as we could do it peaceably, we gave employment, now and then, to non-society men; but we received notice we must give up the one or the other, and were obliged to abandon employing non-society men. We have found ourselves prevented from introducing improved processes of manufacture, to a small extent; treenails turned by machinery, and copper punched by machinery, are not allowed in graving docks. The argument against machine-made treenails, and machine-punched copper is, that turning treenails, and punching copper, employs old and disabled men, who thus get the same wages to the end of their days. In the building yards, these restrictions do not apply. We have never been interfered with as regards wages. The wages are fixed by mutual agreement. I think the workmen who chiefly belong to, or are active in, the trade society, belong to the higher class; but I cannot give any very distinct opinion upon the subject. We never attempted to introduce piecework, it would be difficult to apply it. When there is a demand, I think the workmen could secure a fair rise of wages without combination, but I think the combination prevents a reduction in idle time. For instance, in the last few years I think wages would have fallen much lower if it had not been for the Union. We have seven years' apprenticeship; only one apprentice is allowed to three men at *old* work, but we are not interfered with in the kind of work they may do. I think the effect of combination is to equalize wages, and to keep them steady. I think it has sometimes kept them down as well as up, in fact, prevented fluctuations of wages. In 1854 wages got up to 8*s*. per day, which was simply the result of the competition of the masters to obtain the services of the men. I don't think the trade has been materially affected by the Union. The building part of the trade is not subjected to the action of the Union, as private yards are free from the rules which prevail in graving docks, but the building trade has been driven from Liverpool by the want of accommodation. I think the effect upon the moral character of the men of the Union is rather beneficial than otherwise.

"It is a singular fact, that I never knew a shipwright detected in stealing copper, though they have great opportunity of doing so; and though, taking the usual average, such cases might probably occur; and I cannot attribute this to anything but the action of the Society." In answer to the question as to what evils arise from trade societies:—"Some years ago, having previously used the old-fashioned bellows, we put up very expensive machinery, when a rule was made by the ship *smiths* that the iron knees should be charged by the piece at the same rate whether made by the old-fashioned bellows or by machinery, so that the profit derived from the capital invested in machinery was to a great extent lost, though the power of turning out work more rapidly was of course a great advantage. I think the working of the apprenticeship system is most desirable in securing good workmen; were there no such system, we should have a very inferior class."

From inquiries elsewhere, I am disposed to believe that the number of shipwrights at present in Liverpool, unconnected with the Liverpool Club, is about 300. What proportion of those are in connexion with the "United Kingdom Amalgamated Society," I have been unable to learn, and the latter society has refused to give us any information. The secretary of the Liverpool Club informed the Committee that he believed there were about 1,700 in February, 1860; there had been about 1,900, but there had been a great many deaths lately, and there were more Liverpool shipwrights aboard men of war than ever was known. It may be desirable, as far as possible, to compare the number of shipwrights and the tonnage paying dock dues in the port since 1820.

	Number of Shipwrights' Club.	Number of Apprentices.	Number of Vessels.	Tonnage.
1820	—	—	7,277	805,088
1824	887	290	—	—
1840	—	—	15,998	2,445,708
*1844	1,500	(?)	—	—
1850	1,592	610 (?)	20,457	3,536,337
1856	1,790	(?)	20,886	4,320,618
1859	—	—	21,214	4,511,969
†1860	1,700	(?)	—	—

There are the non-society men, who are not reckoned here, and who are, as before mentioned, estimated at present at 300, but I have no data for estimating their numbers at any previous period.

In conclusion, I have only to state that my sole duty has been to arrange the facts which I have been able to procure, and not to make deductions from them. I would simply point out that the very peculiar nature of the trade, as explained at the commencement of this account, renders great care necessary in making any generalizations from those facts. My best thanks are due to Mr. Caleb Smith, present, and Mr. Charles Grayson, former secretary of the Master Shipwrights' Association; and also to Messrs. Hough, Williams, and Caxton, secretary and representatives of the operatives' association, and to various other friends who have afforded valuable information.

SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE TYNE.

ABOUT the shipwrights of other places than Liverpool, the information received is very imperfect, as the Amalgamated Shipwrights' Association have decided that it is wiser for them not to give the Committee any. The shipwrights of the Tyne have, however, been less reserved, and have sent a series of answers, of which the substance will be hereafter given. Before the committee of 1825, on combinations, a number of witnesses were examined, belonging to this branch of industry, and the following is the substance of the evidence gathered upon that occasion.

* Between 1844 and 1850 the secretary informed the committee of 1850 that the number in the club had risen to 1,638.

† The Liverpool Committee on Trades' Societies were informed that the number had at one time been as high as 1,900.

SHIELDS AND NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE.

[Examined:—A Master Shipbuilder from Shields; the Solicitor of the Master Shipwrights of the Tyne and Wear; and three Journeymen Shipwrights, two from Shields, and one from Newcastle-on-Tyne.]

In October, 1823, the foreman of a master, at South Shields, found cause to complain of insufficient work on the part of the men engaged in repairing a vessel, and afterwards dismissed them; all the other men in the yard took up their tools and went away, and the ship stood idle ten days. The shipowners of South Shields resolved, in the spring of 1824, to employ no men who were members of the Union. All the men were discharged, and remained out for sixteen or seventeen weeks, though often in a state bordering on starvation. The masters admitted that there was no violence at that time. The ground of this proceeding was the support given by the men to the shipwrights at Sunderland, who had refused to work with any master unless he would stipulate not to take apprentices for less than seven years: a previous strike on the same ground had occurred at Shields, for three or four days in February. Wages had nothing to do with the dispute. Some men were sent to prison under the Combination Laws, but this had no effect on the strike. The difference was at last accommodated on the masters promising to take no more three years' apprentices at that time.

The masters had an agreement among themselves, that in case of a dispute between any master and his men, "the whole of the yards should be closed until the dispute was settled." In the dispute about apprentices, just now referred to, 400 men were discharged, of whom more than 300 belonged to yards in which there was no disagreement.

By a rule of the combined masters, men dismissed by any one of them could not be taken on by any other of their body. The Union at South Shields was formed in June, 1823, and contained 600 shipwrights. It had no communication, by delegates or otherwise, with the Unions of Newcastle and North Shields. Though there were no rules to that effect, the members of the Union would probably have declined working for any master who took more than a certain number of apprentices, or with any shipwright who was not a member of the Union; the latter case however could scarcely arise, since "there was no man in Shields but was a member of the Society." None but persons who had served a seven years' apprenticeship could, by the rules, be admitted members of the Society. A non-unionist would not be threatened or injured. The Society had no secret rules.

The Shipwrights' Union at Newcastle-on-Tyne, consisting of 239 members, was unconnected with any other society. It gave relief in cases of sickness, accident, and death, but "never yet to men who refused to accept the wages offered them by their masters."

An increase of wages from 4*s.* to 4*s.* 6*d.* a day was granted at once, on written request of the men, in November, 1824.

There was no rule in the Newcastle Society prohibiting apprentices from going from one yard to another, to assist in finishing work, though the practice was objected to.

From that time to the present I have been unable to gather any information. The only rules I have received are those of the "Newcastle-upon-Tyne Shipwrights' Union Society." There are two sets, viz.: one relating to trade, and the other relating to benefits received. The former has the somewhat singular title of the "Rules, Opinions," &c., of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Shipwrights' Union Society; and commences thus:—

"1. The members of this Society work at shipwrights' work only with each other, and the members of the United Kingdom Amalgamated Society of Shipwrights.

"2. The members of this Society consider the making of iron knee-moulds; building chain-trunks; laying half-decks and forecastle floors; putting bulwark around bows; building sterns on any new or old vessel; building bulksheads in any old vessel; building round-houses; putting pumps and similar work in vessels; cutting hause, scupper, port, or any such holes; and the putting in of hause-pipes, &c., &c., belong to the shipwright trade; and other trades have infringed on the right of that trade by doing the above-named things. This Society, therefore, urges each of its members to withstand any of these or similar infringements in future, by strictly adhering to, and fully carrying out Rule 1st."

With regard to this second rule, Mr. Thomas Pringle, in a little pamphlet, written in a moderate, and apparently candid spirit, remarks:—

"Only recently, on the Tyne, there was a strike of joiners on account of this rule being enforced by the shipwrights. The joiners contended stoutly that much of the work claimed by the shipwrights was joiner's work, and a regular quarrel ensued between the two classes, one refusing to work in the same yard with the other, until they came to a mutual agreement irrespective of the master.

"It is amusing to observe that those shipwrights who are so jealous of any other workmen interfering with their duties, . . . become wagon builders, house carpenters, and in instances even labourers at 2*s.* 6*d.* a day, rather than work at 4*s.* a day as shipwrights. The Shipwrights' Society urges each of its members to withstand strictly any infringement of their rights. No one but a ship carpenter—no house carpenter—will be allowed to make moulds for iron knees, build chain-trunks, lay half-decks and forecastle floors, &c., but not a word does the Society urge about its being unfair for a shipwright to build wagons or construct houses."

Then follow some rules, laying down stringent regulations as to overtime, amount of wages to be demanded, &c.

"4. This Society condemns the practice of any of its members working overtime whilst any of its members are unemployed.

"5. At whatever time of day a member of this Society is discharged, either at the finishing of a vessel or otherwise, not less than a day's pay is required for the day on which he is discharged.

"6. Berths are set off only at caulking: at any other work it is expected that members will assist each other when working together, and thus cause that kindliness of feeling towards each other which is so desirable to us as men, and so necessary to us as members of one society.

"7. Not any member of this Society takes piecework at shipwright work.

"8. Any member wishing to go to any port beyond the twelve ports that are nearest to Newcastle on the north-east coast, must apply to the secretary, who shall write to the port named by the member, to learn if there is a demand for labour at that port."

The last rule is one to which it appears no objection can be taken; but the previous ones appear to fetter the operative considerably, and require strong reason to be shown for their necessity. The same may be said of 13, which follows.

"13. This Society does not countenance the taking of lads to the shipwright trade who are under fourteen or above fifteen years of age; nor are the weekly wages of apprentices to be, at any time, more than ten shillings.

"14. As one of the objects of this Society is to secure, as far as possible, constant employment to its members, there ought to be limits with regard to the number of apprentices taken in each yard, otherwise the employers will have the power to overstock the labour market to what extent they may think proper."

Then follow, among others, rules relating to the number of feet which is to be considered a day's work in caulking. This for old work is declared to be,

"18. For either plank or sheathing ..... 70 feet per day.
For new sheathing ..... 80 „
For old decks ..... 90 „

"19. On Saturday six feet less is caulked than on other days, when forty feet is the day's work, and ten feet less when it is seventy feet, and fifteen feet less than when it is one hundred feet, and so on; as the time of work is three-twentieths less than on other days, therefore, three-twentieths less work is caulked.

"20. Each of the above scales we will endeavour to perform at all times, providing we receive oakum that is fit for spinning with, and driving, and proper oil to caulk with; and also, providing that a stage is ready to commence caulking on. Should it be requisite, at the commencement of a day's work, or at any other time of the day that interferes with a day's work of caulking, for the caulkers to *make* a stage, or do anything else but caulk, and what is connected with it, then so much less than a day's work must necessarily be caulked, as the above scales apply only to *caulking*, and not to caulking and making stages, or anything else.

"21. The Society, whilst it strongly condemns the practice of

hurrying along a seam in caulking, recommends each member to do his work WELL, rather than to do it QUICKLY and IMPERFECTLY.

"22. This Society also strongly condemns the practice of *Dreaming*, which is not even an apology for not doing that which it is intended to represent—caulking. It is, as its name indicates, sound, and nothing more; and the Society advises, that not any of its members should lend themselves as tools to those who practice this deception.

"23. During the times that the decks, top-sides, or binds, of a new vessel are being caulked, all members who are working at the vessel are entitled to the usual allowance of ale; and, also, from the time forward that caulking takes place below the binds."

Why *all* workmen upon a ship should require the usual allowance of ale, when only *part* are employed in caulking, does not distinctly appear. The rules then go on to exact that:—

"24. The riming-wedge money, for vessels of *six hundred* tons and *upwards*, is *four shillings* for each caulker; and for vessels *below* six hundred tons, two shillings. Members caulking both sides of a vessel are entitled to double riming-wedge money.

"25. A member caulking a day's work at the top-sides of a vessel is entitled to full riming-wedge money, although he should not caulk the vessel down, providing that it is not through his own fault that he does not.

"26. The riming-wedge money, for caulking new work at an old vessel, is *one shilling and sixpence;* which sum any member is entitled to who caulks a day's work of new work at an old vessel.

"28. From the time that the tide leaves a vessel until it returns to the vessel, is considered a tide's-work; or from the time of a vessel taking the ground till low water. If, when a tide's work is commenced when the tide leaves a vessel, work is continued until high water, a tide and half-day is claimed. The same claim is also made when, the tide's-work having commenced at the time the vessel took the ground, work is continued until the tide arrives at the vessel; and should work be continued until high water, two tides would be claimed. *Not any one to work at both sides of a vessel at one tide, unless in search of a leak.*"

What the effect of these rules is can only be properly estimated by a man practically engaged in shipbuilding or repairing; but to an unpractised eye they appear to be very stringent. The 29th rule provides that any resolution passed at a head, half-yearly, or special meeting, cannot be amended or repealed until such amendment or repeal has been given notice of at two successive meetings without the motion for discussion having been negatived. At the close of the benefit rules, I find this rule:—

"Any member calling another a liar, reflecting on his character, or on his receiving relief from the Society's funds, he shall be fined two shillings and sixpence.

"If any member shall be censorious with the conduct of the committee when they acted for the general good of the Association, he shall be fined two shillings and sixpence."

The rules state the Society to have been established in 1823, and the rules of the benefit society revised in 1838,—of the trade club in 1855. The secretary of the South Shields Shipwrights' Society informs us that his Society numbers about six hundred members, that the conditions of entrance are seven years' apprenticeship in the port, that they are amalgamated throughout the United Kingdom, to the number of eight thousand members, but do not acknowledge any central board. He goes on to say, "We consider trades' Societies necessary to enforce seven years' apprenticeship, and also that seven years' apprenticeship is indispensable to every efficient workman, and our practical experience of upwards of thirty years goes to prove that the workmanship is of a decidedly superior character to what it was before the establishment of our Society." A frequent correspondence is said to take place between the secretaries of the various societies as to the state of trade in different ports. The rate of wages is by the day, and is 5*s*. per day; a week's notice is given by mutual agreement between employers and employed. In relation to strikes, an employer informs the Committee that strikes have been common during the last two years; that the last commenced in May, and terminated in August, 1859, being in consequence of a demand of an advance of 1*s*. per day; trade was dull at the time, and wages at 4*s*. per day. The masters at first declined to advance wages, but subsequently offered 4*s*. 6*d*. per day, which was declined, and the offer was withdrawn, but ultimately the masters had to give in, in consequence of individual employers not holding out. The men were supported in strike by the Union, by a payment of 2*s*. per day, while the funds lasted—afterwards less—and also by being employed as labourers in a yard where an employer had introduced sixty Scotch shipwrights. There was some intimidation, and the men implicated were brought before the magistrate, but the general conduct of the shipwrights was not violent. The workmen made the demand as a union, embracing the North Eastern Ports. In 1850, the following placard was posted, which speaks for itself.

"The following regulations to take effect on Monday, the 20th January, 1851, and to be observed in all the yards on the Tyne from that day.

"At a meeting of the shipbuilders, dock-owners, and patent slip-owners of the River Tyne, held at the Commercial Hotel, North Shields, November 4th, 1850, to take into consideration the subject of a printed pamphlet, purporting to be 'regulations henceforth to be observed by the shipwrights of the Tyne,' it was the unanimous opinion of the meeting that to submit to the operation of all the rules set forth would be at once, *and for the future*, to subject themselves to the will of their workmen, or rather that of their leaders;—which would insure not only the sacrifice of the proper interests of the members of this Society, but also the discouragement of their best shipwrights, and ultimately the ruin of their trade in this port.

"It was therefore resolved :—

"1. That the rules entered into in October, 1842, by the ship-

builders, and dock and slip owners of the River Tyne, be reprinted, and presented to the shipwrights as the only terms by which the members will consent to be governed.

" 2. That the various insurance clubs of the river Tyne be made aware of those rules, and be requested to give them their sanction and support.

" 3. That the gentlemen present sign those rules, and that those who were absent be requested to do the same, and when those rules are signed by all, that they be acted upon by all the trade.

" RULES REFERRED TO ABOVE.

" 1. That the masters and foremen employ such men as they think proper, and in such way and manner as they think fit, and that no restriction shall be put in regard to apprentices.

" 2. The men to be discharged at any period of the day, provided they have notice at the commencement of the day or the night before how long they will be required.

" 3. That the masters will employ such men for foremen as they think proper, without any interference or annoyance from the men.

" 4. That the men be required to work until four o'clock on Saturdays, and no time shall be given for allowance on that day.

" 5. That riming wedges only be paid for when they have caulked 50 feet, and no allowance made for single wedges.

" 6. No allowance to be given to the men at new ships, except when caulking (except to the persons employed in caulking?).

" 7. All tide's works to be paid according to day's pay, and on no occasion to be entitled to double tides during one tide.

" 8. To work at any part of a ship during the time the water is from her, according to the direction of the master or foreman.

" 9. No extra time shall be paid for *undocking* a ship if during the regular hours of the day, but a quarter-day shall be paid for *docking* if before six o'clock, and a half-day for docking or undocking, if after six o'clock at night, or before six o'clock in the morning.

" 10. That the wages be governed by the demand for men.

" 11. That no given number of feet be considered a day's work when caulking, either at new work or old, but that it be mutually understood every exertion and attention shall be paid to give satisfaction whenever, or at whatever work, they are employed."

At a meeting held at Mr. John Ayre's, Broad Chare, Newcastle, November 11th, 1850, it was resolved:—

" That the resolutions entered into at a previous meeting held at North Shields, on the 4th instant, be now confirmed, and that the secretary be instructed to have the said resolutions fairly copied, appending the rules made by the master shipwrights in 1842, and get the same signed by those of the trade who were not present at the meeting that evening."

Signed by twenty-four employers.

SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE WEAR.

[Materials:—A Defence of Trades' Union in general, and the Sunderland Shipwrights' Society in particular, by an Operative Shipwright, 1857; Answer to Employers' Questions; the Shipwrights' Trades' Unions of the Wear and Tyne, by Thomas Pringle, 1860.]

THE evidence of the employer is as follows:—"We employ on an average about 100 men, exclusive of apprentices. It is daywork, shipwrights being paid 5*s*., and ship joiners and smiths 4*s*. 6*d*. per day; sawyers per 100 feet. They are all in separate societies. All leading men, with few exceptions, in the societies, are skilled workmen. The societies make their own rate of labour, and enforce it, and pay each man, good or bad, the same rate per day. We never have had any non-society men, it being next to impossible to obtain any. We are obliged to take any kind of men at times, but keep the best men when there is a chance. We are always prevented from giving higher wages to better men, by their own rules of wages being uniform for good and bad men. The Union won't allow any but society men to be employed. We are prevented from taking contracts for fear of rise in wages, which happens with so little notice as to cause a great loss in the event of a rise, and the loss of time by strike, when purchasers require them by set times. We see no tendency to improvement. Good workmen would always command fair remuneration without combination. There is a shipbuilders' society but only in name, as the interests differ so much they never hold together. We were never fettered as to number of apprentices, but not allowed to take them over fourteen. As soon as an apprentice enters a yard he has to give in his name to the Society; a copy of the rules is given to him; if he infringes them they deal with him as they think fit, at the expiration of his apprenticeship, which has a very bad effect on the apprentices; and the fixed rate of wages when they are out of their time gives them no stimulus. The effect has been, that it has driven the trade from the port in a very large measure. We cannot give any instance in which a general advance of wages has taken place in our trade without the intervention of a trade society, or without a strike or threat of strike. Gaining their ends so much has made the workmen very independent in manner. I think each master should arrange with his own men, and if they could not agree appoint a referee. The Shipbuilders' Society was got up seven years ago, when strikes were so prevalent, to settle by arbitration all cases, but they have never succeeded in doing much." A few extracts from an article in the *Sunderland Times* about Trades' Unions, and from Mr. Pringle's pamphlet, and the Operative Shipwrights' Defence, must close this division of our subject.

From the *Sunderland Times*, 7th July, 1860.

"Analysing the latest published returns of the shipping of the kingdom, we find that, in the year 1859, there were built in the United Kingdom:—

	"Tons.
"799 Timber vessels, measuring	130,116
140 Iron do. do.	55,854
Total	185,970
Of Colonial built vessels, registered in this country, there were 18	8,292
Of Foreign do., 60	15,840
Total added to our register	210,102

"It will be seen that, notwithstanding the facilities offered to foreigners to sell their 'cheap' vessels to British owners, they have only supplied about a twelfth of the British register in 1859, while the colonial builder, who at one time supplied no inconsiderable portion of our tonnage, only contributed about a twenty-third part of it in the same year.

"We find, from the corresponding returns for 1853, that in that year there were—

	"Tons.
"671 Timber vessels built	149,685
127 Iron do.	58,486
Total	208,171
32 Colonial do.	26,448
102 Foreign do.	30,073
Total	259,687

"The falling off in the British timber shipbuilding trade is thus remarkably small, on comparing the two years, if we take into consideration the long continued depression in the shipping trade:—

	"Tons.
"Total Timber vessels built, 1853	149,685
Do. do. 1859	130,116
Total decrease	19,569
Timber vessels built at Sunderland, 1853	68,479
Do. do., 1859	34,684
Decrease	33,795

"The time was when it was the boast of every Sunderland man that our shipbuilding was year by year increasing in a greater ratio than at other ports; but now the case is altered. There was a decrease in the tonnage of timber ships built during last year, as compared with 1853, in the United Kingdom; but the falling off at Sunderland far exceeded the total decrease, the tonnage built at this port having, in round numbers, decreased one-half, from 68,479 in 1853, to 34,684 in 1859, while the trade at other ports increased from 81,206 in 1853, to 95,432 in 1859. The question naturally occurs, in what does the difference consist which results in a retrograding instead of an advancing trade? As regards materials, this port possesses advantages at least equal, if not superior, to what it did when we were going ahead. There has also been a great improvement in

the quality of the outfit supplied to the vessels built. Neither the skill of our builders nor of the workmen has deteriorated. Sunderland retains her fame for the beauty of the model of her vessels, and especially for the extent to which the great practical problem is realized, of combining swift sailing qualities with carrying capacity. Our capacious docks have afforded increased, and, we might add, unequalled facilities for the construction and outfit of the largest description of vessels. Why, then, have we not maintained our relative position? Why, indeed, have we not advanced, and absorbed a larger proportion of the timber shipbuilding of the kingdom? We know of no answer—no explanation which can be given, except that which is embraced in one word—STRIKES! Strikes, continuous disputes between our shipwrights and their employers, have been the sole cause of the lamentable and continuous decline which has within the last few years marked the history of 'shipbuilding on the Wear.' Why, then, have we had those strikes? Because radically erroneous views have been entertained respecting the efficiency of a strike, or cessation from labour, as a means of obtaining higher rates of wages, or any other object, for which the strike may have been undertaken. We cannot apportion the exact amount of folly or blame, on the part of the employers or employed, which have led to a strike, but may, with all the authority which belongs to an indisputable question in arithmetical calculation, maintain that a strike for wages which requires more than the most temporary cessation of labour to obtain it, cannot, even if obtained, be permanently beneficial."

From Mr. Pringle's Pamphlet, 1860.

"Last year, when shipwrights were wanted for the Government, Sunderland was naturally enough looked to for a supply. Hundreds of unemployed men were walking the streets in idleness at the time, and gladly accepted the wages offered at Woolwich and Portsmouth of 4*s*. 2*d*. per day. Their mates in work, on the banks of the Wear, were receiving 4*s*. 6*d*. per day at the same time. Notwithstanding this difference in favour of the Wear men, and the fact that scores were still at home unemployed, a demand was made by the Union of 6*d*. per day more, and a strike ensued at this period of depression. Because the masters would not, or could not, afford to give 30*s*. per week, hundreds of men were thrown out of employment. Government was only giving 25*s*.;—the Wear men were not allowed to earn 27*s*. a week. No; the masters must be compelled to pay 30*s*. per week, or the workmen must do without any wages at all, receiving the half-pay, or the proportion allowed by the Union.

"An extensive builder, at Monkswearmouth, offered to guarantee to his workmen employment all the year round, if they would refrain from obeying the orders of the Union, when required to strike for this advance; and he offered to bank £500 in their name, which he would forfeit did he not fulfil his pledge; but they would not listen to his proposal.

"The most undignified part of the obstructive laws is that in which

the shipwrights, men who have served a seven years' apprenticeship, first class artisans, insist upon doing such labourage as carrying wood and making stages. The practical result is to make a vessel cost as much as possible. Why do the best men not sweep the yard and clean the saw-pit every two hours? It would be nearly as rational.

"The *extortionate* rules are numerous on the Tyne. The Wear rules are more moderate. These rules relate to the pay for getting vessels into dock, &c., before or after the usual hours. Half a day's pay is required. A member must have a day's pay, whatever time of day his work may be finished; berths are set off only at caulking; a scale of work to be done for a day's work is laid down, and no more work than this scale allows must be done for a day's work. The Society 'strongly condemns the practice of hurrying;' *all* members working at the vessel are entitled to the usual allowance of ale, though only part are employed caulking. The riming wedge money is four shillings for a ship of six hundred tons and upwards; for vessels below six hundred tons, two shillings; members caulking both sides of a vessel are entitled to double riming wedge money. The rules relating to tide's work, too, are a fine instance of care for the interests of the members of the Society. The Sunderland rules only require allowance to *all* shipwrights working at the new ship when the *majority* of hands are caulking or coppering. Any member requested to move or moor a vessel, after being launched, is to be paid tide's work.

"The policy is faulty, and the result is known. It is no longer a secret that vessels belonging to the port of Sunderland have been sent to Aberdeen to be repaired, and the new shipbuilding trade of the Wear is sadly falling off. What wonder, when the fact is patent that the Sunderland builder, or repairer, pays in wages to every man two-fifths more than his Aberdeen competitor pays. What matters it that the Aberdeen men also have a union society and belong to the 'United Kingdom Amalgamated Society of Shipwrights;' they work for two-fifths less money than the Wear or Tyne men, and thereby cut them out of the market. So much for the co-operative brotherhood."

From The Operative Shipwrights' Defence, 1857.

"The present social order, bad as it is, the absence of civil wars in England, may be mainly attributed to trade societies. When the time arrives for the middle classes to ruin and crush all trade societies, then woe unto the rich! for civil wars are nigh at hand. Pause! meditate awhile, ye rich men, and ask yourselves in what lies your security.

"Permit me to state a few facts relative to the Sunderland Shipwrights' Society. Before the present Society was organized, and at the time when there was no society, what was the state of trade, and the condition of the shipwrights of the port of Sunderland? Just before the formation of the present Society, shipwrights' wages were

three shillings per day, hundreds were unemployed even at that rate of wages, and numbers were breaking stones for sixpence per day. Provisions and clothing were dearer then than at present. So much competition, so much excessive labour, so much slimming of work, existed, that the port of Sunderland acquired an unenviable name amongst all mercantile men. Sunderland slimly-built, leaky ships were talked about throughout the whole of the United Kingdom. Sunderland shipwrights learned the lesson then that blind competition for labour created low wages, excessive labour, mutual distrust and deception, envy and hatred. Men felt the great want of a society then. The present Society was organized, and the avidity with which the men joined it is a great proof of their appreciation of its value. There are about 1,800 members in this Society, and throughout the United Kingdom there are about 12,000 shipwrights, members of trade societies, which fact decidedly proves they believed in their utility.

"After the shipwrights of Sunderland formed their society, did it depress the shipbuilding trade on the Wear? Did that port obtain a worse or better character? Now the plain fact is, that Sunderland became the greatest shipbuilding port in the United Kingdom a few years after this Society was instituted. The character of the port of Sunderland rose in the estimation of mercantile men, and the ship-yards on the banks of the Wear were in the most flourishing condition, building, instead of low-classed, low-priced, leaky ships, large first-class ships, commanding the best price given for ships.

"Trade societies are admirably adapted to check the mere adventurer, who seeks to produce only to realize wealth, regardless of the article produced. The present Shipwrights' Society was instituted in 1846, and has continued progressing since that time to its present state of organization.

"Let any feeling, thinking man read the terrible history of the sweating system in the tailoring trade—the history of the factory operatives—the Spitalfields weavers—the agricultural labourers; and amongst the female operatives, the poor glovers, dress and mantle makers, slop-workers, and needlewomen in this country,—and ask themselves whether low wages have improved the social, moral, and intellectual condition of those classes of operatives. Let thinking, intelligent men ask themselves what will be the consequence if the men in the iron trades and the wood trades—the men engaged in the construction and navigation of our mercantile marine navy, should be reduced to the condition of the above-mentioned operatives. Will they as quietly submit?

"It is true there is an indirect species of compulsion in trade societies which the present state of society renders absolutely necessary. It consists in this. Society men refuse to work with those who are utterly regardless of their own interests—men who never look beyond the hour in which they are living; often drunken reprobates, selfish, unfeeling, greedy men, who cannot feel in their hearts to contribute their mite towards the support of their fellow

men. Such men have often constant work, and are utterly regardless of their suffering brothers. Another class are the religiously fanatical, who seldom think for themselves, and implicitly believe everything the minister says. Such are the men who refuse to become members of trade societies. Their numbers are equal to about two per cent., compared with those who freely and eagerly join trade societies. If this compulsion be tyranny in the eyes of others, it is for the working man 'Freedom's best and bravest friend.'

"Trades societies are admirably adapted for obtaining correct data of the average amount of sickness, the number of deaths and accidents, &c.; thus they can work with more certainty than those societies which are composed of members of mixed trades."

DUBLIN, BRISTOL, AND LONDON.

THE substance of the evidence brought before the committee on combinations, in 1838, concerning Dublin shipwrights, was, that the trade had been completely driven away from the town, in spite of great natural advantages, in consequence of the violence of the unionists, resulting sometimes in murder, technically called "slating."

About Bristol and London, our only information is contained in the following abstract of the evidence of the committee of 1825.

A shipowner in Bristol stated that the carpenters employed on one of his vessels struck. They demanded an advance of wages (which was conceded), an allowance of beer, an increased allowance of time, and an alteration in the hours of work, which were refused. The shipowner procured artisans from Plymouth. The Bristol carpenters hearing of their arrival, met the men, and told them that they would not be allowed to work in Bristol. They paid their expenses back to Plymouth, and treated them with spirits, which they handed up to them on the coach, bidding them drink to the success of the Carpenters' Union. They told them to stop any others of their craft whom they might meet on the road to Bristol. If a shipwright, not belonging to Bristol, came into the port, he was allowed to work on producing his certificate and indentures and on the payment of £5 to the Union. This rule, however, seems to have been framed under the belief that its application would never be requisite. On one occasion, some men from Milford having paid the £5—which the masters advanced to them—the Bristol carpenters were so disappointed that they said they would have £10. Although no assaults nor attacks had actually been committed, the witness thought the safety of a non-unionist workman, in Bristol, would be very questionable.

Twelve master shipbuilders, a shipowner, and ten working shipwrights, in London, were examined by the committee.

A strike is mentioned as having occurred in the Thames yards in the year 1802: Its object was to resist an attempted reduction of wages. It lasted six months, and was marked by intimidation and violence; one shipbuilder indeed nearly lost his life. The evidence

brought before the committee referred, however, chiefly to the action of the society of working shipwrights, known as the Provident Union, which was established on August 16th, 1824. The principal point of dispute between men and masters related to the right said to be claimed by the committee of the Union of sending hands into the masters' yards without the consent of the masters. In the month of January, according to the statement of an employer, the committee of the Union sent into his yard six men who had been discharged from his Majesty's docks, whom otherwise they would have had to support. The foreman, by his master's instructions, told them that "It was impossible the claim of the committee or of any persons to send men to work could be admitted;" and the men were dismissed: on which, about 120 men threw down their tools and retired from the yard. This right, however, was only claimed by the men in cases in which they had a contract. They conceived that "when they had a contract, for the execution of which they were responsible, they were the best judges who should assist them to fulfil that contract." This was a privilege, they maintained, which belonged to them by the common practice of the river. "If I were to take," one witness says, "a ship to build to-morrow, I should not think of asking the master nor the foreman what men I should bring in." Uninterrupted usage for ten years was alleged by the men in defence of this "prerogative."

The understanding which the working shipwrights wished to establish on this point is expressed in the 3rd article of their rules: "When additional hands are required, if such additional hands are set on by the builder or foreman, the contractors shall be at liberty to refuse any man or men, stating a sufficient reason for doing so; and if we are directed to procure the additional hands, should the builder or foreman object to any man or men so set on, a sufficient reason will be required by the party who contracts for the job." It was acknowledged that the difference between this latter clause and that insisted on by the masters, that "when additional hands are required, . . . if they were directed to be procured by the people, no man was to be engaged without the approbation of the builder or foreman,"—was "the great cause that had ultimately led to all other differences," and "had brought all the business of the river to a stand." The practice in the yard where the dispute arose was said to be different from that of some yards in the trade. When a gang was employed on contract work, the master in question did not allow the contract to be made with any takers, but with every specific man who was to perform the work. The ground taken by the masters generally in this dispute, and the reasons of it, are thus given. They urged that as they were responsible for the due performance of any contracts into which they might enter, and had no remedy against the men for neglect, they ought to have the selection of the men to whom they entrusted work, the men being allowed liberty of objecting to any of their mates, and if the master persisted in employing the men objected to, of quitting his service.

Previous to the outbreak of the dispute, the matter seems to have been arranged, without raising the question of right, by deference on each side to the wishes and objections of the other.

Another ground of difference between the master builders and the operative shipwrights related to the mode of payment adopted by the former. It was complained that they "did not pay at all times alike for the same thing in the same yard." The men therefore drew up a book of prices, according to which everything should be paid by measurement,—the code of prices "to be subject to modifications according to existing circumstances, as it is of no consequence to the working mechanic whether he gets 3*s.* a day or 7*s.*, provided the necessaries of life agree with those sums." The masters, however, refused to accede to the book of prices proposed by the workmen, or to meet them in discussion. They insisted that a uniform scale of payment was altogether impracticable in their trade.

A third grievance alleged by the men referred to the apprenticeship system. The masters were charged with appropriating the profits legitimately accruing to the workmen from the labour of their apprentices.

Another complaint urged by the men was, that in case of any dispute occurring between themselves and the masters, the apprentices of the yard were put on the work which the men should do.

The masters maintained their right to be absolutely unfettered in the disposal of their apprentices.

The usage as to allowing shipwrights in the river to have their sons apprenticed to them seems to have differed in different yards. In some it was not permitted; in others, where it was occasionally allowed, the custom was to divide the wages equally, the master taking half, but giving the boys the whole surplus earnings which they might make by working by the job. With a view to control over the boys, apprentices for whom constant employ could be found were nominally bound to their fathers, the master contracting to find them work in the same manner as if they were bound to himself, so long as they conducted themselves properly.

The main point of difference, however, related to the alleged interference of the Provident Union with the authority of the masters in the internal regulation of their own establishments; and to the tyrannical control exercised by the committee of the Union over the individual determinations of operatives. In consequence of the meddling of the Union, the masters in concert drew up a series of regulations, containing the decisions they had come to on the several points under controversy, and required subscription to them from every workman who should enter their employment. These regulations the Union refused to accede to.

It was the opinion of the masters, that many members of the Union would have been glad to go to work under their rules, but "it would have been at the peril of their lives to attempt it." "If they dared to dispute the regulations [of the Union], not one shipwright in the river would work with them." "One man who held out for a con-

siderable time was almost starved." Workmen who had struck are said to have stated, over and over again, that if it were not for the dread of the Union, they would be very glad indeed to come to work again. "They have told me," says one employer, "collectively and individually, that if I could give them the smallest colour on earth, that would be a justification to them, . . . they would all return to work." The protection of the magistrates was found necessary for eight or nine men, not of the Union, who remained at work, and who were annoyed and assaulted.

On behalf of the men, there was a complete denial "that there had ever been any interference of the committee of this Union, or of the general body of the Union, with respect to the conduct of men in the yards, as to their either working or not working under certain circumstances." They never assumed, either in committee or general meeting, "a shadow of jurisdiction in cases not included" in their printed rules. In May, 1825, the masters, who had formed themselves into an association to resist the proceedings of their journeymen, resolved to combat the strike by increasing the number of their apprentices. The evidence taken before the committee does not bring the history of the dispute beyond this point.

AN ACCOUNT

OF SOME

TRADE COMBINATIONS IN SHEFFIELD,

PREPARED FOR

The National Association for the Promotion of Social Science,

AT THE REQUEST OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES.

By FRANK H. HILL.*

In making Trade Societies in Sheffield the subject of a special paper, a local, may seem to have been substituted for the industrial, classification, which has been observed throughout this volume. This is not altogether so, however. The trades which constitute the staple industry of Sheffield are nearly confined to that place, and to the neighbouring villages of South Yorkshire and North Derbyshire. The scissors trade which still lingers at Salisbury, the finer articles of cutlery which are made in small quantities in London, even the growing manufactures of files and other tools at Warrington and Prescott, do not constitute any considerable exceptions to the practical monopoly which Sheffield possesses in the production of steel goods, while the hardware trades carried on at Birmingham are of a character so different from those of which Sheffield is the seat, that little rivalry exists between the two towns.

The physical geography of Hallamshire, as the district is named in which Sheffield stands, and which extends in undefined limits for some miles round it, early determined the industrial pursuits of its inhabitants. Its quarries and mines of coal and iron-stone, the abundant supply of water afforded by the Don and its tributaries, and the falls in those rivers, which give available water-power, present unusual facilities both for the conversion of iron into steel, and for the manufactures of those articles of which steel is the material. A line of Chaucer's, "A Shefyld thwytel bare he in his hose," shows that at least before the close of the fourteenth century these advantages had been turned to account.

From the time of the Roman *collegia*, or associations of artisans,

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*For the materials which are reproduced in the following paper, I am indebted in large measure to Mr. John Wilson, of 124, Hanover Place, Sheffield, who has directly communicated much valuable information, or indicated the sources where it might be found. The account of the Association of Amalgamated Trades is drawn from documents furnished by its secretary, Mr. W. Dronfield. The resolutions of the combined masters, from 1809 to 1814, have been furnished by T. A. Ward, Esq., of Sheffield,—to whom, and to other gentlemen who have aided me, my best acknowledgments are offered.

to that of our modern Unions, trade combinations have been found wherever a distinct trading class has arisen. They probably existed in Sheffield, in some form or other, at this period. The first detailed record of them, however, which we possess, is of considerably later date. It is found in a document entitled "The Actes and Ordinaunces made and agreed uppon . . . by all the hole fellowshippe and company of cutlers and makers of knyves wthin the lordshippe of Halomshire, . . . as also by the righte honorable George Erle of Shrewsbury lorde and owner of the said lordshippe," &c. The affiliation of modern trade societies to this ancient company, the identity of many of their regulations with those of the acts and ordinances, and the common object of both, are so clear and striking as to make an account of them desirable. Combinations in Sheffield are essentially a historic subject. They can be understood only imperfectly without some reference to the past, whose impress they bear and whose features they perpetuate. The reference shall be as brief as the interests of clearness admit.

The Acts and Ordinances mentioned above are "recited in the Court Rolls of the manor of Sheffield of the 7th Elizabeth . . . and again more fully in 1590." An account of them is given in Mr. Hunter's *History of Hallamshire*, on whose authority the following statements are made. The ordinances are said to be framed for the "better relief and comodytie of the porer sorte" of the cutlers' fellowship, an object with reference to which modern trades' societies are frequently justified. At a dinner of the associated trades of Sheffield on the 21st of February last, the uniform rate of wages insisted on by some of the unions for workmen of various degrees of skill was defended on this ground. "The great bane of social life, and of all life, in England," said one of the speakers, who, though himself neither a workman nor a master, was addressing and was applauded by an audience of unionist workmen, "was that we were too much 'every man for himself, and the devil take the hindmost.' It was often urged against trades' unions that they brought down the better class of workmen to the level of the lower, and raised the lower to the level of the better class. That was perfectly true: as a workman said to him that afternoon, it was taking a discount off the good workman and sticking it on to the indifferent one. Well, there were precious few masters who would willingly take a discount off themselves, if they were good business men, in order to give their poor fellow-masters a lift with it. It spoke strongly for the sympathy there was among the working men that they were willing to help each other to such an extent." The efficiency of trades' societies in saving their unemployed workmen, not always thrown out of employment by a strike or dispute with their masters, from destitution and the degradation of parish relief, is a point which is much insisted on by the members of those societies. They are, to a great extent, designed, whether wisely or not, for the relief and commodity of the poorer sort of their respective fellowships.

The first article of the ordinances—prescribing that no manufacturer,

whether master, servant, or apprentice, shall "perform 'any work apperteyninge to the said scyence and mysterye of cutlers' for eight-and-twenty days next ensuing the 8th day of August in each year, nor from Christmas to the 23rd day of January; but shall apply himself to other labours," under a penalty of 20*s.*,—may perhaps have been intended to impose a restriction upon production, such as modern trades' societies in Sheffield and elsewhere strive to enforce by limitation, not of weeks, but of hours and earnings. The Christmas week is still a complete holiday in Sheffield among the artisans; and the Tuesday afternoon is kept with Sabbath sanctity so far as the doing of no work is concerned.

The ordinances regarding apprentices need only to be quoted in order to exhibit their parallelism, or rather identity, with the regulations adopted by trade societies.

"2. No person to exercise the said trade who has not served an apprenticeship of seven years, or been instructed by his father for that term. Penalty forty shillings. 3. No person to have more than one apprentice in his service at one time, nor to engage another till the former be in his last year, nor take any for a less term than seven years. Penalty forty shillings. 6. No person to be suffered to exercise the said trade who has not sufficiently learned it within the said lordship. Penalty as before. . . . 10. No journeyman to be employed under the age of twenty, except such as shall be allowed by the Jury, or who have been apprentices, or taught by their fathers. Penalty forty shillings. 11. No person who has not served an apprenticeship, or been instructed by his father, to set up in the trade, except he first pay to 'the Jury, or twelve men of the cutler's occupation for the time being,' five pounds, one half for their use, the other half for the poor of the said corporation, to be distributed by the Jury."

The other ordinances prohibit the grinding or glazing of knives by persons not resident within the lordship and liberties, the using of forged marks, the hafting of knives for, and the selling of knife-blades to, any person not dwelling within the liberties.

In 1624 an Act was passed, entitled "An Act for the good order and government of the makers of knives, sickles, shears, scissors, and other cutlery wares in Hallamshire, in the county of York, and parts near adjoining." The preamble, after setting forth that "Whereas the greatest part of the inhabitants of those parts consists of persons engaged in the different departments of the cutlery manufacture, and that by their industry and labour they have . . . relieved and maintained their families, and have been enabled to set on work many poor men inhabiting thereabout, who have very small means or maintenance of living other than by their hard daily labour, as workmen to the said cutlers," proceeds to allege that "now of late other persons using the same profession in and about the same lordship and liberty, and within six miles compass of the same, not being subject to any rule or government, or search of any others of skill in those manufactures, have refused to submit themselves to any order, ordinance, or search, *but every workman has taken liberty to him-*

self to take as many apprentices, and for what term of years he pleases, whereby and by the multitude of workmen, the whole trade and the exact skill is like in short time to be overthrown." For the remedy of this evil, and to put a check to the manufacture of "deceitful and unworkmanly wares" which such persons were in the habit of making to the "great deceit of his Majesty's subjects, and scandal of the cutlers of that district and liberty, and disgrace and hindrances of the sale of cutlery and iron and steel wares there made, and to the great impoverishment and overthrow of multitudes of poor people," "it is enacted that all persons engaged in those manufactures within the aforesaid limits shall form one body politic, perpetual and incorporate, of one master, two wardens, six searchers, and twenty-four assistants, and the rest commonalty of the said company of cutlers of the lordship of Hallamshire," with power of making laws and of levying penalties ("to be given to the poor of the said corporation"). "There is some relaxation," says Mr. Hunter, in his account of this Act, "of the strictness of the former ordinances in relation to apprentices, the members of the corporation being allowed to take a second apprentice when the first has served five years, but none were to be taken for a shorter term than seven years, nor for a term that shall have expired before the apprentice shall have attained the age of twenty-one." One of the earliest exercises of their legislative functions by the company was the passing of an ordinance by which "the restrictions as to taking apprentices, already sufficiently rigid, were made yet more so." "To the six searchers power was given of entering dwelling-houses where they had reason to suppose that deceitful wares were concealed. . . . The members of the body were prohibited from working for strangers or selling to them unfinished wares."

This Act was amended in 1791. A more popular mode of electing the officers of the company (hitherto annually self-elected) was adopted. It was also enacted, "That any number of boys, the sons of freemen, might be taken apprentices by members of the corporation, but that of children of freemen, only one was to be held as an apprentice who was in the first three years of his term; that no person should be allowed to exercise any of the incorporated trades who was not a freeman; but that freemen might employ persons who were not freemen, on new inventions; and that any persons who were not freemen, might obtain the freedom of the corporation, on payment to the funds of the body of the sum of twenty pounds." While these acts were in force, they sufficiently compelled, by their regulations in regard to apprentices, that limitation of the numbers of the artisans for which the Sheffield Trades' Societies have since strenuously, and in some cases successfully, contended. Probably for this reason, we find little trace of trades' societies until within a short time before the repeal of the restrictive clauses. It is not true, however, as has been stated,* that until 1810 there were no combinations

* See evidence of Mr. Jackson before the House of Commons, in 1838.

in Sheffield, nor that previous to that date the masters and the workmen lived together on the most perfect terms of good fellowship.

In 1787, for example, there was a strike among the cutlers against the "extortionate practice" of making thirteen knives to the dozen. On this occasion the feelings of the men towards one at least of their employers found expression in the following verses, which, as a specimen of those that "indignation makes," may be here cited. They are entitled—

W—— AND HIS THIRTEENS.

"That monster Oppression—behold how he stalks!—
Keeps picking the bones of the poor as he walks.
There's not a mechanic throughout the whole land
But what more or less feels the weight of his hand.
That offspring of Tyranny, Baseness, and Pride,
Our rights hath invaded and almost destroyed.
May that man be banished who villany screens,
Or sides with big W—— and his thirteens.

CHORUS.

"Then may the odd knife his great carcass dissect,
Lay open his vitals for men to inspect;
A heart full as black as the infernal gulf,
In that greedy, blood-sucking, bone-scraping wolf.

"That wicked dissenter, expelled his own church,
Is rendered the subject of public reproach,
Since reprobate marks on his forehead appeared,
We all have concluded his conscience is seared.
See Mammon his God, and oppression his aim:
Hark! how the streets ring with his infamous name!
The boys at the play-house exhibit strange scenes,
Respecting big W—— and his thirteens.
And may the odd knife, &c.

"Like Pharaoh for baseness—that type of the de'il—
He wants to flog journeymen with rods of steel,
And certainly would, had he got Pharaoh's power,
His heart is as hard and his temper as sour;
But Justice repelled him and set us all free,
Like bond-slaves of old in the year Jubilee.
May those be transported, or sent for marines,
Who work for big W—— and his thirteens.
And may the odd knife, &c.

"We claim, as true Yorkshiremen, leave to speak twice,
That no man should work for him at any price.
Since he has attempted our lives to enthral,
And mingled our liquor with wormwood and gall.
Come, Beelzebub, take him, with his ill-got pelf,
He's equally bad, if not worse than thyself!
So shall every cutler that honestly means,
Cry, 'Take away W—— with his thirteens.
And may the odd knife, &c.

"But see foolish mortals, far worse than insane,
Three-fourths have returned into Egypt again!
Although Pharaoh's hands they had fairly escaped,
Now they must submit for their bones to be scraped.
Whilst they give themselves and their all for a prey,
Let us be unanimous, and jointly say:
'Success to our Sovereign, who peaceably reigns,
But down with both W——'s twelves and thirteens.'
And may the odd knife, &c."

The object of these maledictions is said to have been "sung out of the theatre" by the indignant populace, a circumstance to which allusion is made in the second verse.

On September 24th, 1790, the *Sheffield Register* records that five scissor grinders were committed to Wakefield House of Correction for having kept work out above eight days, and refusing to finish it,—at a discount, apparently, of fifty per cent. from the established prices. Four of the men were committed to prison for three months, the other man for one. They also had their "sacred poet," who compares the men to Mordecai, who will not bow down to Haman.

"This Hallamshire Haman keeps blacks at command,
To spread his dire mandates throughout the whole land;
Together they meet, and their malice combine
To form a most hellish, infernal design.
On malice, on mischief, on tyranny bent,
Five poor honest grinders to prison they sent:
Though nothing they had of these men to complain,
But not paying discount for wearing a chain.

CHORUS.

"Then Haman he vowed that all Israel should die,
And Mordecai hang betwixt the earth and the sky;
But though he on plunder and rapine was bent,
He never took discount at fifty per cent."

The use of the word *blacks*, in the first line of this effusion,—the common name, at the present time, of non-unionist workmen,—is tolerably clear proof of the existence of combinations before the date in question.

On the 9th of September, 1791, there was a general meeting of manufacturers, at which it was "Resolved, that a committee be appointed and subscriptions entered into to prosecute the scissor grinders and other workmen, who have entered into unlawful combinations to raise the price of labour." On the 3rd of April following, the Scissor-smiths' Benefit Society was formed. "I have no doubt," says Mr. Wilson, to whom I am indebted for all my information as to combinations previous to 1809, "that it was a trade society to oppose the actions of employers."

On July 14, 1796, the cutlers and the workmen in other branches of the spring-knife trade struck for an advance of wages. Their demands were—(1:) "That all forging of scales, springs, and blades shall be advanced twopence per shilling." (2.) "That all spring-knives shall be advanced in price twopence per shilling, from the lowest up to those sold at 7*s.* per dozen." (3.) "That all spring-knives from 7*s.* to 15*s.* per dozen shall be advanced one penny per shilling." (4.) "That all spring-knives shall be advanced in the price of working one halfpenny per shilling from [knives of the price of] 15*s.* up to those of the highest prices, the advance of prices to take place from the 21st of August next."

The masters met on the day on which this strike took place. Out of ninety-five who were present there were only four dissentients from the following resolution :—"That under present circumstances

this meeting cannot comply with the propositions of the workmen for an advance of wages." By a second resolution they bound themselves not to employ the journeymen who had quitted the service of any of their number, without the consent, in writing, of the journeymen's former master.

It is remarkable, however, that the Act 5 Geo. IV. c. 95, which in its first section enumerates, in order to repeal, all the statutes against combinations of workmen, most of which were directed against special trades, mentions none affecting Sheffield workmen. From this it may, perhaps, be inferred that disputes between masters and men there were exceptional, and were seldom pushed to an extreme.

In 1809 trade was very brisk, and the prices of provisions and of all the necessaries of life were very high. The artisans, on this ground, united to demand an advance of wages. They felt great dissatisfaction also at the irregularity of prices given for the same work in the same trade, and they required, therefore, uniformity, as well as increase, of payment. They determined to level upwards. The masters combined to resist them. A meeting of the manufacturers of the corporate trades was held on the 4th December, 1809, and resolutions were passed to the following effect:—

"(1.) That the combinations and conspiracies among the workmen are dangerous.

"(2.) That any unreasonable advance of wages would be impolitic, and ought to be resisted.

"(3.) That any great advance in the prices of goods would materially injure the trade.

"(4.) That the masters in each trade be advised to appoint a committee to investigate the complaints of the journeymen, but not to proceed with the investigation till the journeymen who have withdrawn from their work have returned to their duty."

I have no details of the conduct of the workmen from 1810 to 1814, though such details might no doubt be found in the Sheffield newspapers of that time. The character of their proceedings generally, as regarded from the masters' point of view, is sufficiently apparent from the preceding resolutions, and from the following, which were passed a few months later.

At a meeting of manufacturers, on the 6th of April, 1810, it was resolved:—

"(1.) That the present combinations and arbitrary measures of the workmen to obtain an exorbitant advance of wages are a serious and alarming evil.

"(2.) That to counteract the improper designs of the journeymen, prosecutions be commenced against such as are guilty of unlawful combinations.

"(3.) That subscriptions be entered into and a committee appointed for that purpose."

It is announced in the *Sheffield Iris*, of July 2nd, 1810, that the disputes in the spring-knife trade are adjusted.

This was by the concession on the part of the masters of a list of

prices, since known as the statement of 1810, which seems to have been a compromise between the demands of the workmen and the list offered by the employers. A similar adjustment took place in the other trades. In the subsequent history of trade disputes at Sheffield, this statement is constantly appealed to by the workmen as the standard of a fair but not excessive rate of wages. Perpetual efforts have been made to re-establish it. It remained in force until the year 1814. The departure from it which then took place was the act of the workmen themselves, who thought that the state of trade justified them in asking a further advance. The masters alleged that the demand made was exorbitant, and that if granted the effect on prices would be such as to exclude Sheffield goods from foreign markets. They therefore again met and formed the "Sheffield Mercantile and Manufacturing Union." A general committee of the Union was appointed together with special committees for the several trades. The following resolutions among others were agreed upon:—

"Rule 4. No merchant or member shall purchase any article of Sheffield manufacture at a higher rate than he could in 1813, nor at any price from persons who were not master manufacturers in that year, nor at any manufactory where the grinders have suspended work for an advance of wages, till the general committee give notice that the prices have been settled between the masters and workmen of that branch.

"Rule 5. No manufacturer, under a penalty of £100, shall pay higher for any description of work than he did in 1813, except in branches respecting which notice shall have been given by the committee. Nor shall he have any workman from any other manufactory, till the general committee shall have given notice that the prices in that branch have been settled.

"Rule 6. When the general committee are informed by any branch committee that the majority of workmen in that branch have accepted their proposals, they shall give public notice, and then the merchants may purchase goods, and the master manufacturers may employ the same.

"Rule 7. Poor manufacturers shall be assisted by loans from the fund of the Union.

"Rule 8. The general committee shall endeavour to introduce into the town workmen of the trades not incorporated.

"Rule 10. Addresses shall be published (*a*) to master manufacturers, urging them to prosecute workmen engaging in combinations or conspiracies, the expenses of the prosecutions to be borne by the Union; (*b*) to the magistrates, urging them to enforce the laws; (*c*) to the Cutlers' Company, urging them to petition Parliament to amend their Act by rescinding the restrictive clauses respecting non-freemen and apprentices; (*d*) to the overseers of the poor, requesting them not to relieve persons whose masters are willing to employ them at the prices of 1813; (*e*) to workmen, urging them to continue to work at the prices of 1813, till their respective cases shall be decided upon, and proper relief afforded.

"Rule 12. A subscription shall be opened, and ten per cent. of the sums subscribed forthwith paid."

A subscription list was presently commenced. The subscriptions consisted of twenty-two subscriptions of £100 each, and a proportionate number of smaller sums, none being less, however, than £5. Altogether £6,749 was subscribed by 401 firms.

On the 28th of March there was a meeting of the committee of the Masters' Union. The following resolutions were passed:—

"That no master (being a member of the Union) shall, under a penalty of £100, employ any workman who shall be proved to have paid money for the support of any man who has struck for an advance of wages.

"That if before the 30th of April, the grinders shall not have agreed with the respective committees of their trades, no merchant shall buy goods, nor manufacturer employ workmen, under a penalty of £100, till the general committee shall give notice that all the grinders in the respective branches have come to an agreement with the branch committees.

"That any manufacturer who may be under the necessity of giving notice to his grinders, shall give notice to them all."

So far as the repeal of the restrictive clauses of the charter of the Cutlers' Company was concerned, the Masters' Association achieved their object. They do not appear to have been so successful in any other particular. The statement of 1814, which the Association was called into existence to oppose, was obtained by the workmen, and remained in force until 1818. Indeed the ill success of the Association is acknowledged. For that reason it was the last systematic combination on the part of the Sheffield masters. How far the conduct of the workmen palliated the strong measures implied in the regulations of which the substance has just been given, is a point on which it would be improper to speak without fuller information than I possess. No trade union has ever enforced severer restrictions on individual freedom, by penalties so heavy, even when the relative circumstances of the classes of operatives and of masters are taken into account.

The arguments frequently urged and acted upon, that combinations being unjustifiable *in se*, combinations of masters are nevertheless necessary in resistance to combinations of workmen, seems scarcely distinguishable from the now generally abandoned doctrine, that protective tariffs abroad should be met by a protective tariff at home.

In 1814, the restrictive clauses of the act of incorporation (which had been slightly relaxed in 1801) were wholly repealed. "By an act passed in that year, liberty of engaging, in any of the incorporated trades, either as masters or journeymen, was extended to all persons, whether sons of freemen or strangers, whether they had served an apprenticeship or no, whether they had a mark assigned them by the officers of the Company or no, anywhere within the limits of Hallamshire."*

* Hunter's *Hallamshire*, page 129.

Henceforth the policy of exclusion and protection, which the masters had for some time been gradually relaxing, and had now finally abandoned, was adopted by the artisans. The workmen began to attempt by combinations, not merely to secure what they deemed fair, or at any rate practicable, advances in wage, and to resist unnecessary, or avoidable, reductions, but to aim at regulating, by minute and stringent legislation, the conduct of their respective trades. In order to understand the operations and influence of their unions, some knowledge is necessary of the conditions of labour in Sheffield.

In the manufacture of sharpened instruments, or *cutlery*, the process of grinding is indispensable, and employs many hands. It is generally carried on in establishments known in Sheffield as "wheels." A "wheel" is sometimes a brick building of several stories, sometimes a mere wooden shed, divided into several rooms, or as they are called, "hulls," each hull containing several "troughs" (pronounced "trows"). Each workman has his own trough, which consists of the grinding and other wheels required in his trade. These wheels are connected by "bands," which are often of considerable value, with the steam-engine or water-wheel, by which they are set and kept in motion. A rent, amounting on an average to about 3*s*. 3*d*. a week, is paid to the wheel-owner, either by the grinder himself or by his employer, for the space which the trough occupies, and for the use of the power. So far as the collection of many hands in the same building is concerned, the Sheffield "wheels" bear some resemblance to the factories of other towns, but the resemblance ceases here. In an ordinary factory, one trade only is, or can be carried on. A "wheel" is often occupied by men of a dozen different trades. In a factory, the manufacturer, whether as owner or tenant, is, at least for the time being, absolute; the building either belongs to, or is let to him; the machines necessary in the trade, the looms, spinning jennies, &c., as well as the power that drives them, are his property; the employer finds everything but labour; the artisan supplies nothing but his labour, which,—coming and going as the bell rings,—he renders during certain stated hours of the day. In Sheffield, the order of things is in every point different. The wheel-owners are, generally speaking, a class distinct both from the operatives and the manufacturers, to whom indifferently power and room are let out, trough by trough, in the same building. The distinction between the capitalist and workman is not so sharply marked in Sheffield as elsewhere. The artisan is to a certain extent a capitalist; he contributes not only his manual skill and strength, but, in many cases, pays wheel rent—the materials only being found by the employer. In some exceptional instances, employers provide tools (a term which includes power), and of late some of them have erected sheds for their workmen. In these "wheels," however, where they are not fully occupied by their own men, space and power are let out, as by the ordinary wheel-owner, to other manufacturers and artisans. Further, the Sheffield operative, unlike the factory hand, is not tied to any stated hours of labour;

he has a key of the wheel, and enters it at his own time, working when he likes, and playing when he likes. Where a steam engine is used, of course, he can only work when the power is on; but where the water-wheel is employed, there is no such restriction. It was mentioned before a committee of the House of Commons, in 1833, in illustration of the exorbitant wages alleged to be obtained by saw-grinders, that, in some instances, men had earned in that trade as much as 20*s.* before breakfast on Saturday morning. It turned out that the person to whom alone reference could have been made, was employed in a water-wheel, and had gone to work on Friday evening, after the other men had left. By working all night, until the breakfast hour next day, that is to say, for twelve or thirteen hours, he had earned the sum specified.* This example, if it does not illustrate the point which it was originally adduced to establish, shows the independence of the Sheffield artisan with respect to his hours of working.

While, therefore, the factory-hand is necessarily in a condition of considerable dependence on the manufacturer, who has entire disposal alike of the place, instruments, and conditions of work, this authority on the one side and subjection on the other (legitimate and necessary under the circumstances) scarcely exist in Sheffield. The relation of employer and employed there has very little in it of the relation of master and servant.

The small cost of tools necessary in the Sheffield trades,—not more than a few shillings, in some of them,—the practicability of home labour in almost all except the grinding branches, the nature of the wheel-system, and the facility which the artisan has of selling his goods to the factors (of whom something will be said afterwards), make him very independent of the wholesale manufacturer. The consequences of this deserve noting. Owing to the monopoly which Sheffield practically has of the steel manufactures exercised there, the employer cannot, in the event of his men quitting him, procure workmen from other towns. He therefore sometimes has recourse in self-defence to a peculiar system of hiring, by which, in consideration of a bounty, amounting often to several pounds, an artisan contracts in writing to work for him at a fixed rate of wages, for a year or term of years, in some cases for as many as seven years. The rate is no doubt almost always lower by at least the amount of the bounty than the average wages. When the bonus has been spent, the workman naturally works "sour," as it is expressively termed. Unprincipled masters, it is to be feared, not unfrequently take advantage of a temporary depression of trade, and of the destitution of the operatives, to engage them for considerable periods at rates of wages much lower than their average earnings would be. When, however, as no doubt is often the case, a fair average rate for the

* See Mr. Samuel Jackson's evidence before the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Trade and Manufactures, 1833; and his correspondence thereon with the Saw-Grinders' Committee.—(*Sheffield Iris*, Nov. 19th and Nov. 26th, 1833.)

period of employment is agreed upon, there is much that is advantageous to both parties in this arrangement.*

The class of *factors* has been mentioned, as helping to make the connexion between the manufacturers and artisans looser than it otherwise would be. During the last thirty or forty years both their number and influence have increased in Sheffield, from circumstances which will be stated. In the year 1816, says a Sheffield employer (Mr. Samuel Jackson†), "considerable losses were incurred in consequence of the depreciation which took place in the price of goods on hand, and the stocks of most of the manufacturers were unfortunately very great; but since then few of the manufacturers are in the habit of keeping stocks." The operatives, thrown out of employment, became utterly destitute. Since, however, many of the Sheffield trades can (as previously stated) be conducted at the workmen's own houses, and involve no other outlay than the price of the material and the small sum necessary for tools, they began to manufacture on their own account. In order to force a market, in the absence of any legitimate demand, prices were fixed ruinously low. Of course the workmanship was bad, and the articles, made only to be sold, were often utterly worthless. But the goods so made, even supposing a demand for them, could not reach the purchaser from the garret-workshop of the poor operative. They must do so through the medium of another class, the factors. The factors could obtain their own profit only by reducing the prices paid to the artisans—"the journeymen masters," or "little masters," as they are called—to a point scarcely above the starvation level. In many cases, to gain still further profit, they paid them not in money, but in stuff. That they might compete with the factors and the "little masters" in the markets created by undue cheapness, many hitherto respectable manufacturers were obliged to adopt a corresponding rate of prices, and, of course, of wages, to make articles as worthless, and to pay in stuff. The deterioration of Sheffield goods since the introduction of this system has been rapid and great. Nor has the effect upon trade morality been less prejudicial. The names and marks of reputable makers were struck upon worthless articles to secure them a sale. Of course it is not meant that these acts of dishonesty, though frequent, are any-

* The system called "pawning of workmen" bears sufficient resemblance to this to justify introducing a brief account of it here. It is said to be thus managed: "A clever, but probably dissipated man—a good file-cutter, for instance—contrives to get into debt with his master, say to the extent of £5. Then, finding some other person willing to employ him, he 'pawns' himself to that person for the £5 which he owes, and an additional sum of probably £5 more; changing his employment again and again, as long as he can obtain an additional advance, as an inducement to leave his employer. In this way many of the cleverest workmen in Sheffield are, or were, in a state of quasi-bondage to their employers, for advances which are generally spent in riot and dissipation; and of course the result is, that the man absconds, and the last employer loses his money."—*Sheffield Independent*, June 17, 1854 (quoted from the *Manchester Guardian*).

† See his evidence before the Committee of 1888.

thing but exceptional. Some eminent firms are notable instances to the contrary, and are indeed the chief sufferers from the abuses in question. Many others, less known, are no doubt equally pure. Nor is it intended to attribute the origin of the frauds to the circumstances in connexion with which I have spoken of them. There is, as we have seen, evidence of their existence at the earliest period at which anything is known in detail of the manufacturing industry of Sheffield. Dishonesty in trade is probably as old as trade itself; but it will not be denied that the circumstances referred to have a tendency to increase and perpetuate such malpractices. It is scarcely necessary to add,—except in order to avoid misapprehension,—that, among the factors as well as in every other class, there are fair and honourable dealers, no less than those of an opposite character.

The results just described in general terms are the natural, though not the legitimate or necessary, consequence of the fewness and cheapness of the tools required in the Sheffield trades, and the small capital necessary for their conduct. Apart from the influence of the factors, "little masters,"—whose establishments are confined to their own houses, and who themselves work as artisans with no other assistance than the members of their own family can give—are able, by saving in wages, to undersell the larger manufacturers. Hence again arise the evils which have just now been adverted to. The condition of "journeyman master" is, however, it should be remembered, the natural transition from the position of workman to that of wholesale trader; and though, in most cases, the development goes no further, yet in others it is but one stage in an honourable and successful career. As a rule, however, I believe, the "journeymen masters" are inferior in skill and character to the great body of artisans. Many of them, through inability to turn out articles of sufficient excellence to earn the ordinary wages of their trade, or through difficulty in obtaining employment, owing to their want of steadiness of character, are obliged to manufacture on their own account such goods as they are competent to produce, and to sell them at any price they may be able to obtain. Others set up for themselves in order to withdraw, in their quality of masters, from the supervision which, as journeymen, the Union would exercise over them,—in which they do not always succeed.

In the Sheffield trades, apprentices are bound, as a general rule, not to the heads of firms, but to individual journeymen. This is a natural result of the loose connexion which subsists between manufacturers and workmen,—of the circumstance that the latter are rather independent *employés* than servants.

An apprentice almost always lives with the journeyman to whom he is bound, and who is responsible for his moral and physical well-doing. As piecework is universal in the Sheffield trades, the apprentice is required to earn a fixed sum weekly, according to his ability and the time he has already served. Out of this he receives a proportionate allowance. When he has earned the amount stipulated, his master has practically very little hold on him, except such as may be

due to the personal qualities of both; and in too many cases he is free to dispose of his time, in self-improvement or in debauchery, as he chooses.

The fact that most of the trades in Sheffield can be carried on by individual artisans in their own houses has had important social consequences. A greater proportion of workmen in Sheffield are householders and have votes for members of Parliament than is the case with the same class in any other town. This fact deserves to be stated, because it has bearing on a question often mooted, as to the likelihood of trades' unions applying their organization to political purposes, under an extended suffrage. In this connexion, a few words will afterwards be said with special reference to the evidence as to the Sheffield unions given before the late Select Committee of the House of Lords on the Elective Franchise, the report of which has been recently published. — The superior purity of the women of Sheffield may be not unnaturally referred to this fact, that each family has its own separate house. The cellar-residences of Manchester and Liverpool are unknown here.—Among the men of Sheffield, drunkenness is said to be more general than among other artisans,—in spite, no doubt, not in consequence, of the circumstance now under consideration, and notwithstanding that in command of the elements of physical wellbeing, and in intellectual activity and cultivation, they are quite at the head of their class in England. This habit is probably referable, in part, to the irregularities of their hours of labour, to the power they possess from the first year of apprenticeship of making up for intervals of indolence and self-indulgence by spells of hard work; and in part, to the exhausting nature of their work itself. Mr. Jackson, in the evidence before quoted, states that from the severity of the manual labour necessary in the Sheffield trades, work for a less number of hours there involves as much bodily fatigue as more extended terms of labour elsewhere.

The practice of carrying on certain branches of trade within the houses of the artisans, naturally leads to the employment of women and children in those trades.

The character of the master manufacturers of Sheffield is not less affected than that of the workmen by the peculiar conditions of labour. As the odd term "journeymen masters" implies, the line of demarcation separating the two classes from each other is easily overstepped, and indeed can scarcely be accurately drawn. A journeyman one year may be a master another, and a journeyman again the year after. Masters and men, in consequence, do not hold aloof from each other to the same extent as is the case in most places. Not only have Sheffield manufacturers in many instances assisted in the establishment, and contributed to the funds, of trades' societies with a view to counteract the effects of the factoring and small-master system; but they have, in several instances, entered into joint combination with the workmen, both for special trade purposes and for more general objects. The comparatively unspeculative nature of the business they carry on deserves to be recollected in this con-

nexion; it has prevented the sudden acquisition and the transmission of large fortunes which are common in other seats of manufacturing industry. The class of the *nouveaux riches*, and that which in the course of a few generations springs from it, in which wealth and refinement have become hereditary, are both of them infrequent. Smaller fortunes slowly made, but without the risks attending the opportunity of more rapid gains, are the reward which the Sheffield manufacturer looks to. Hence, there are fewer cases of insolvency here, both in ordinary times and in seasons of panic, than in any other manufacturing or commercial town of equal population and importance. While, therefore, the artisans are of a higher type than those of perhaps any other place, the master manufacturers are, with many exceptions, somewhat lower in the scale of wealth and education than the bulk of their class. In consequence, the gulf between employers and employed is, on this account also, less wide and deep than that which separates them elsewhere.

The facts which have been stated, explain sufficiently how it is that since 1814 there has been no systematic combination among the Sheffield employers. The cutlery and hardware manufactures of the place, requiring comparatively small capital, are, for the most part, in the hands of comparatively small capitalists, to whom a protracted lock-out would be a hazardous experiment. Unskilled labour is quite useless to supply the vacant places of the artisans when on strike; and skilled labour, of the kind required, is scarcely to be had out of Sheffield. The workmen, on the other hand, in case of a dispute, have almost always the resource of selling to factors at prices which do at least interpose a barrier between themselves and absolute starvation.

Further, combinations among masters are always laxer, not only in Sheffield, but everywhere else, than combinations among workmen. The former holding, and pushing to its extreme length, the doctrine that individual competition is the only sound basis of trade, unite reluctantly; they are impatient of combined action, and ready to break loose on the first legitimate or tempting opportunity. The working classes, to whom co-operation is what competition is to the masters, naturally stick more firmly and faithfully together. The machinery of their permanent organizations is more efficient than that of the masters' extemporized and temporary unions. Once more, the number of separate parts of which most articles of the Sheffield manufacture consist, and of successive processes through which every part has to pass, being each the work of a distinct trade,—a strike in one department involves cessation of work in many others. The masters are thus dependent, to a greater extent than in other trades, on small sections of workmen. The workmen are more dependent upon, and therefore the more closely connected with, each other.

The materials at my disposal do not enable me to give a complete history of any one strike or trade society in Sheffield. Without attempting therefore a systematic statement or continuous narrative,

I shall bring together, in the best way I can, such scattered facts as have been furnished to the Committee, or as I have myself gathered chiefly from old volumes and odd numbers of Sheffield newspapers of different dates.

The price list of 1810 was, as we have seen, retained in most, if not in all, of the Sheffield trades until 1814. In that year speculation was rife in Sheffield, and there was a great demand for almost all articles of cutlery. In consequence the workmen asked, and after a struggle gained, a further advance on the list of 1810. Things remained in this state until 1816, when depression ensued, which was at its height in 1820. In that year an attempt was made by the masters and workmen conjointly to support the prices of 1810. A plan, having this end in view, was suggested by the late James Montgomery, the poet, and adopted shortly afterwards at a meeting held at the Town Hall. The workmen agreed to subscribe towards a fund for the relief of their unemployed, at the rate of 1*d.* upon every shilling of their wages; and the manufacturers promised to contribute so much a head for every workman in their service. Voluntary subscriptions and payments out of the parish rates were offered in furtherance of the project. It was thought that in this way artisans out of work might be maintained while the depression lasted without bringing them into the labour market to compete with, and reduce below the list of 1810 the wages of, those for whom there was full employment. As might have been expected, the plan, after a trial of three or four months, proved futile, and broke through, "and," says Mr. Milner, "prices fell to as low a state as they were in previous to the attempt being made."* After a short revival, trade was very dull, and much distress existed in Sheffield from 1826 to 1831. In 1828 a letter was addressed to the Cutlers' Company, by the journeymen of Sheffield, and published in the *Sheffield Iris* of August 5, 1828, in which it was proposed that masters and workmen should enter into co-operation, with a view to the improvement of affairs. The Cutlers' Company expressed their willingness to take part in any practicable plan, and the journeymen suggested one which they regarded as such. It did not, however, meet with the approval of the manufacturers, and the matter seems at present to have gone no farther.

Nearly two years later, the state of trade being still, in spite of a partial revival, far from satisfactory, the journeymen made a second overture to the employers. In the *Sheffield Iris*, of March 4th, 1830, a letter appears from "the Committee of Trades' General Union," signed on their behalf by John Barker, president, and addressed to the master cutler and company. The trades' committee again propose co-operation between masters and men. They complain that the increasing desire to sell cheap and manufacture cheap has led to great distress, and then proceed to develop their plan for what they call a "union of interests," in the following terms:—

"Supposing that there are 12,000 workmen employed in the various

* Evidence before the Commons' Committee in 1833.

branches of manufacture in Sheffield, and that each individual paid 3*d.* per week, 1*d.* into their own trade fund, and 1*d.* into the general fund applicable to all the trades, as occasion might require (for it seldom happens that all the trades are in a state of distress at the same time),—they would raise the sum of £150 per week; moreover [supposing] that each master manufacturer should pay ½*d.* per head for each person he employed, this would add one-sixth, or £25 more, making the weekly sum total of £175, or upwards of £9000 per annum." The sum thus raised, it was suggested, should be under the joint control of committees of workmen and masters. On the occurrence of a pressure so great that the masters could not employ all their hands, "here would be a fund capable of giving relief to the superabundant workmen, and preventing that accumulation of little masters, who are compelled by their necessity to commence manufacturers, and who, by their increase and the quantity of work they are compelled to execute, lead to the continuance of the evil, by adding to the stock of a glutted market." This plan, if adopted, would obviate, the trades' committee contended, the necessity of departing from the regulated prices. "Let us suppose, for one moment," they continue, "that nothing of the kind is attempted, and that, under the present difficulties, a further depreciation of 10 per cent. is effected. If each of those workmen, estimated at 12,000, produces, on the average, goods for the home and foreign market to the amount of 50*s.* per week for each person, the weekly sum of their value is £30,000; the loss to the town is £3000 weekly, or £156,000 per annum; but if by temperate and judicious measures, goods could be *raised* 10 per cent. from their present low value it would make £300,000 difference from that of a reduction. Exclusive of this great evil having arisen to the trade since the alteration of the corporate laws as respects apprentices, hundreds are now never bound at all, and thus a dissolute career is opened to the youth of the town, which might be greatly remedied, if not entirely removed, could a good understanding take place among us, and the system of binding apprentices again be introduced as acted on previous to the alteration in the corporate laws of 1814."

This desire on the part of the artisans to recur to the state of things established by the old charter of the cutlers, significantly illustrates the fact that the notions as to trade regulation, prevalent among modern unionists, are an uncancelled remnant of an economical doctrine once, and at no very remote time, almost universal. Even if false, it is not likely that practices and opinions sanctioned by the assent and example of centuries, should, though abandoned by others, be speedily exploded among a class particularly tenacious of usage and precedent.

The letter of the Union Committee was taken into consideration by the Cutlers' Company, and the proposed plan (which in principle was similar to that brought forward by Mr. Montgomery in 1820) dismissed by a unanimous resolution, framed in the spirit of the reigning economical school:

"This Company is of opinion that nothing can advance the price of labour and goods, but an increased demand for them, and with this view of the subject they decline joining the Committee of the General Trades' Union in the plan proposed by them."

In 1831 there was a partial revival of trade, and the workmen in various branches began to enter into combinations to regain the prices of 1810. Towards the conclusion of that year, however, many large American orders were suspended, and ultimately countermanded. Prices came down much lower than they had ever been before. The depression continued until 1833. About this time a society was formed in Sheffield, called the "Freemen's Society," composed of old freemen of the Cutlers' Company. It included both masters and journeymen, to the number of about 300, the latter forming a considerable majority. The object of the society was to procure a re-enactment of the restrictive clauses of the Company's charter. It was dissolved soon after the parliamentary inquiry, in 1833. From the spirit of the resolution just quoted, it is probable that the masters belonging to this society were most of them little or journeymen masters.

In 1833, trade began once more to revive, and reached its maximum of prosperity in 1835 and 1836, when a panic occurred. The depression which followed, continued from 1837 to 1842.

Early in the session of 1838, a select committee of the House of Commons was nominated to inquire into the operation of the Act 6 Geo. IV. c. 129, and generally into the subject of combinations of workmen. In Sheffield it was believed that this inquiry was but preliminary to a renewal of prohibitory legislation with respect to trades' societies. On the 3rd of March, the filesmiths summoned a meeting of workmen, at which deputations from twenty-six different trades were present. A provisional committee was appointed, and a resolution was passed, asserting in the broadest and briefest terms the opinion of the meeting "That trades' unions are desirable." Subsequent meetings were held, and a regular committee was formed to watch the proceedings of the Legislature and to select and prepare evidence to be submitted to the Commons' Committee. It was found, however, impracticable that the Sheffield witnesses should be examined in 1838. They were assured that they stood first for the year following, but unfortunately the committee did not ask, or, asking, did not obtain, leave to sit again. In this same year a proposal was made to the Unions of Sheffield to join themselves, in their character of trades' societies, to the chartist agitation, then becoming formidable. At a meeting of the organized trades, held to consider the proposition, on September 12, it was rejected by a majority of twenty to twelve, on the ground that political questions did not fall legitimately within the province of trades' societies. Nearly two months later, however, they passed a resolution condemnatory of the corn laws, alleging that the question in this case was one of trade rather than of politics, and further guarding themselves from any compromise of the neutral character of the societies, by describing themselves in

their resolution, not as trades' delegates, but simply "as a portion of the working classes of Sheffield."

Early in 1841, the delegates, under the impression that some measure prejudicial to their Associations was contemplated by Mr. O'Connell, and not unfavourably regarded by many members of both houses, again met to concert measures of resistance.

In 1842, the distress of the artisans of Sheffield became extreme. Their condition was brought before the House of Lords by Lord Radnor on the 16th of June. He stated that the number of inmates in the poor-house was, in 1837, 261; in 1838, 401; in 1839, 386; in 1840, 443; in 1841, 490; at present (1842) 600. There were also, 1000 able-bodied people receiving out-door relief; and yearly payments to the casual poor had increased from £715 in 1837, to upwards of £15,000 at the (then) present time. The county-rate had increased from £712 in 1837, to £2,453 in 1841.

On the 21st of July, Mr. Ward stated in the House of Commons that 1,500 fathers of families were out of work, and dependent on the parish; and that no fewer than from 10,000 to 15,000 workpeople were wholly destitute. The casual weekly payments, said Mr. Parker, his colleague in the representation of Sheffield, which in 1835 were from £16 to £24, now ranged between £371 and £424.

It is probable that these sums, and the distress which they relieved, would have been much greater, but for the exertions of trades' societies to keep their own members from the parish.

The *Sheffield Independent* of May 12th, 1842, gives "the following abstract of the amounts of money paid to those workmen who have been out of employ, belonging to the Table-knife Grinders' Society, from Nov. 13, 1830, to April 30th, 1842.

Nov. 13.	1830	Dec. 24,	1831	£1,332
Jan. 1.	1832	Dec. 24,	1832	2,572
...	1833		1833	742
...	1834		1834	653
...	1835		1835	60
...	1836		1836	40
...	1837		1837	2,650
...	1838		1838	2,417
...	1839		1839	2,279
...	1840		1840	3,546
...	1841		1841	3,003
...	1842	April 20,	1842	1,356
	Total			20,630*

* The mode in which these sums were raised was not always so unobjectionable as the object to which they were applied was praiseworthy. Early in 1840, a Sheffield magistrate stated that he had met a body of a hundred and fifty table-knife grinders parading the town. On inquiring of them the purpose of their assembly and procession, they told him that they were collecting subscriptions from members of their union who had refused to pay. In one case they seized the tools of a defaulter, who had given a promissory note. An action was brought against them under 6 George IV. c. 125, s. 3. The magistrate expressed his opinion that, morally speaking, the man was bound to pay. For three years, the sums allowed by the table-knife grinders, to single men out of employment was 6*s.* a week, to married men 8*s.* a week.

During the five years previous to 1842, about £15,000 were paid to their poor, by the saw, edge-tool, file, Britannia metal, and silver-plating trades.

The saw-makers, though numbering only 200 journeymen, had paid in the five years previous to 1841 between £3000 and £4000 to their unemployed.

The following statement (published about this time) exhibits the sums "paid by ten only of the organized trades during four and a half years of the [then] present commercial depression." . . . .

Edge Tool Forgers...	...	...	...	...	£1,450	0	0
Edge Tool Grinders	...	...	...	...	1,978	0	0
File Smiths ...	...	...	...	...	1,144	6	0
File Hardeners ...	...	...	...	...	470	0	0
File Grinders ...	...	...	...	...	1,129	15	11
Razor Grinders ...	...	...	...	...	400	0	0
Saw Makers ...	...	...	...	...	3,539	14	0
Saw Grinders ...	...	...	...	...	1,506	6	0
Table-blade Forgers	...	...	...	...	1,406	16	0
Table-blade Grinders	...	...	...	...	16,131	4	8
Total	...	...	...		£29,856	18	7

It is stated that during the same period the sums given in parish relief amounted to only £16,000.

In spite of these exertions, the file smiths alone of the Sheffield artisans appear, at least up to 1839, to have succeeded in keeping their members from the necessity of applying for parish relief, or from soliciting the charity of individuals. The Table-knife Hafters had work found them in 1840, on fields belonging to Mr. Ellison and the Duke of Norfolk. They were employed in getting gravel, and published an appeal to "Gentlemen, Builders, and Plasterers," urging them to buy from them, and describing their sufferings, and the struggle they had made against them.

A letter from a "Table-Knife Hafter," in the *Sheffield Independent* of January 1st, 1842, states, that his branch is, with one exception, the most numerous in Sheffield, giving employment to 1000 men, in addition to boys, women, and girls. The writer complains that work, for which, six years ago, 7*s.* was paid, is now worth only 4*s.* 9*d.*; that to do it requires two days of reasonable hours' length; and that out of the 4*s.* 9*d.*, the artisan has to find all his tools and materials, such as rosin, whiting, oil, wire, glue, emery, &c. Hard and protracted work is necessary for a man to earn 10*s.* or 12*s.* a week, free of expenses.

On the 18th of January, the fork-grinders issued an address, in which they stated that their condition was becoming unbearable, and implored aid. A man could earn in this trade, after paying for his materials, grinding, stamping, and other necessary expenses, no more than 6*d.* a day.

These are a sufficient sample of facts which might be cited to illustrate the suffering at this time of the Sheffield artisans.

During this trying period, Sheffield was remarkably free from the political agitations which were prevalent in many parts of England,

and conspicuously so in the manufacturing districts of Lancashire and Yorkshire. To their great credit, the most influential of the trades' societies leaders, with the acquiescence of their followers, held aloof from and resisted, as heretofore, all attempts to turn their organization to political account. An attempt to hold a meeting of delegates, on Wednesday, August 17th, to consider the propriety of striking for the Charter, was so thinly attended, that no conclusion could be arrived at. Another meeting, called by five delegates, was held on the Monday following (August 22nd). Very few of the trades took notice of the summons, though all of them were invited to attend. The secretaries of the grinders' unions issued the following protest, addressed—

"*To the Public of Sheffield and its Vicinity.*

"Whereas a placard has been recently posted on the walls, stating that, 'At a meeting of several delegates of the trades of Sheffield, it was unanimously resolved, that a meeting be held in Paradise Square, on Monday morning, August 22nd, at ten o'clock, to take into consideration the present state of the country,' and as the above announcement may lead to some misunderstanding in the public mind in regard to trades' unions, we, the undersigned, being each of us secretary to his respective trade, do deem it right to state that neither we, nor the trades we belong to, have anything to do with the aforesaid meeting.

"Thomas Nelson, Razor Grinder.
"Charles Skinner, Scissor Grinder.
"Thomas Newton, Pen Blade Grinder.
"Matthew Bailey, File Grinder.
"William Broadhead, Screw Grinder.
"George Career, Edge Tool Grinder.

"N.B. The table knife and fork grinders not in union at the present time."

The meeting failed of its object, so far as any practical end was concerned. Comparatively few Sheffield men took part in the proceedings, which were left in the hands of the strangers who were the real promoters of the movement,—if anything so languid can be called so. The complaint of one of the speakers that "The trades of Sheffield were disorganized on political subjects," and that this "was the fault of the leaders of the trades, who gulled them," involves (contrary to the intention of the speaker) a high compliment to the discretion and good sense of those trades and their leaders. A recommendation that "all the trades should meet and resolve to discuss politics," met with no general response.

In some other respects, the conduct of the Sheffield artisans, or rather of a portion of them, was not so praiseworthy. Many outrages took place; *rattening* (as the stealing of workmen's wheel bands, thus disabling their machines, is called) was frequent; and several instances occurred of worse crimes. Incendiary fires broke out at more than one factory, and a "wheel" in Abbeydale was blown up by gunpowder. In consequence, a letter was published, on the

19th of November, signed by seven artisans, urging that a meeting of the trades be called to protest against these acts. The meeting thus summoned, was held at "The Old London Prentice," on Thursday, December 8th, when the following resolution was passed:—"That it is the opinion of this meeting that the late outrages in respect to rattening and destruction of property are a disgrace to a civilized age, and that it is the height of insanity in any trade to suppose that any good can come from the perpetration of such crimes. That considering the strong and bitter feeling that must arise in the minds of the influential part of the public towards these proceedings, and the desire it must produce to put down trades' associations, it is the interest and duty of this meeting to devise the best possible means to check the further progress of such brutal scenes, and that a select committee be appointed from the various trades to carry the above into operation."

The trades represented at this meeting were the file smiths and grinders, the saw makers and grinders, the saw handle makers, the saw back grinders, the edge tool forgers and grinders, the Britannia metal smiths, the razor smiths and grinders, the joiners' tool makers, the brace-bit makers and grinders, the stone masons, and the scissor forgers. Whether any scheme was devised of checking outrages, I am not informed. If any were, it was ineffectual.

Early in 1843, distress still continuing, and many operatives being out of employment, and, in spite of the exertions of the unions, thrown upon the parish, the Board of Guardians addressed a recommendation to employers, suggesting to them that they should divide their work, so as to employ the greatest number of hands; and requesting them to give information to the board of any case in which, on any pretext whatever, employment on these terms should be refused. The trades' delegates, no doubt regarding this as an attempt to infringe upon their several lists of prices, met to protest against the course proposed; and the guardians withdrew their recommendation.

In April, 1843, the committee of trades' societies, impressed with the necessity of adopting decisive measures for the improvement of the condition of the several trades, published an address to the artisans of Sheffield and its vicinity. In it they attribute the evils under which they labour to two causes—1. The increase of machinery. 2. The manufacture of cheap and trashy articles. They state that plans have been laid before them for the amelioration of their position. These plans resolve themselves into three—1. The formation of a union to embrace all the trades of Sheffield. 2. That the manufacturers be invited to enter into "a coalition with the workmen to check the rotten system which prevents the former getting fair profits and the latter fair wages." 3. The purchasing of land for spade-cultivation by unemployed workmen, by which it may be made more productive than by the use of the plough. The committee, without absolutely recommending this scheme, seem inclined to it. If the table-knife trade, they suggest, had adopted it, instead of spending £21,000 in keeping their unemployed labourers in indolence, they would probably

have found their advantage in so doing. A numerous meeting of delegates was held at the Old London Apprentice, on the 22nd of May, to consider these suggestions. Some of the delegates complained of the small interest, only 2½ per cent., which their money, when put into the bank, returned them. It was lent to manufacturers to speculate with and they lost it, or, as it was expressed, they were robbed, as in the case of a bank which had recently failed. The advantages of investment in land were dwelt upon. Capital, it was urged, spent in spade-cultivation gave a return of 45 per cent.; whereas the plough yielded only 28 per cent. profit. It was stated that the joiners'-tool and brace-bit makers and grinders had resolved to take a piece of land, and throw their unemployed men upon it. They had appointed a committee of eight to meet once a week, and compare notes of their observation and experience. It was proposed that shares be taken to bear an interest of 5 per cent., for five years or longer, as might be required. With a view, however, to the trial of a joint experiment on a large scale, the trade in question had resolved to wait till the present meeting, that all the trades might join. If they declined to do so, their particular branch would make a venture for itself. The delegates representing the file trade stated that their society had passed a resolution doubting the practicability of the scheme, and refusing to take any part in it. No conclusion was come to upon this subject, but a resolution was passed declaring :—

"That a Union of all the trades in Sheffield is absolutely necessary, in the present alarming crisis of affairs, in order that such measures may be resorted to as shall tend to place us artisans in a better condition ; and that a committee be chosen, consisting of at least one of each trade, to devise plans to effect that desirable end."

The discussion having once or twice threatened to assume a political complexion, and a resolution (which was afterwards withdrawn) on the subject of the National Debt having been proposed, the delegate of the saw grinders (Mr. Broadhead) declared that politics would disorganize the Union, and that his trade would not have sent him to the meeting if they had expected that politics would have been introduced.

The conclusion of the year 1843 and the following year were marked by so many and such frightful outrages, directed against unpopular manufacturers and non-unionist workmen,* that on November 13, 1844, a meeting of the master manufacturers was held, at which it was resolved "That an Association be formed for compensating any member who shall suffer any outrages in person or property, to be called 'The Sheffield Manufacturers' and Tradesmen's Protection Society.'" At this meeting the general conduct of trades' societies was freely discussed, and the grievances of the masters brought forward.

A counter meeting of trades' delegates was held on the 20th of November. They passed the following resolutions :—

* As I shall afterwards speak of trade outrages in Sheffield, I reserve details.

"1. That this meeting is of opinion that the arguments advanced by the merchants and manufacturers, at their meeting at the Cutlers' Hall, were in a great measure at variance, as respects the legitimate objects the meeting was called for, viz., the better protection of life and property; that while the present meeting approve of every effort to render the above more secure, it deprecates, in the strongest terms, the illiberal and ungenerous attacks that have been made against associations of workmen; and this meeting is further of opinion, that the best means of defence is called for to guard more effectually unions of workmen against such ill-founded and slanderous imputations as have been ascribed to them.

"2. That it is the opinion of this meeting, that a public meeting of the inhabitants of this town be convened as early as possible, and an invitation sent to the party who met at the Cutlers' Hall to discuss certain propositions which will be submitted to them through the medium of the public press."

3. By the third resolution, a committee of nine was named, to arrange the time of meeting, and to invite the masters to attend.

These overtures were not met by the masters in person, but early in 1845 they found a champion in the member for the borough, the late Sir H. G. (then Mr.) Ward. His vote upon the bill for reducing the hours of labour in factories had dissatisfied some of his constituents among the operative classes; and in the discussion of these differences the question of trades' societies had emerged. It was determined that the points at issue between those societies and the employers should be publicly debated by Mr. Ward and certain delegates on Mr. Ward's annual visit to Sheffield. The debate took place on the 28th of January, 1845. Among the grievances of employers, Mr. Ward mentioned the numerous outrages supposed to be perpetrated at the instigation or with the connivance of trades' societies, but which the delegates present denied to have any connexion with Unions, and joined him in reprobating; the practice among the workmen of quitting their work at an early hour, or leaving it altogether, when the master had a contract in hand, in order to prevent its completion at the time stipulated; and the interference of Unions in several trades with the individual freedom of the artisans, so that no man was allowed to seek employment or make his own bargain with any master who might be willing to take him. The master, he alleged, must obtain his men from the Committee of the Union, and the committee sent such men as they pleased. In some trades, masters were obliged to take men in the order in which they stood on the roll of unemployed.

To this it was replied that no master was obliged to take an inferior workman; the master was informed of the character of the man, whether he stood first or second on the list; and no employer was obliged to take one who was unsuited for the kind of work which it was required that he should perform.

The delegates adduced several instances of the beneficial effect of the limitation of numbers in a trade, and of the short-time system.

Among them were the following:—In 1837, the combination of makers of joiners' tools broke up; the number of hands at that time in the trade was 80; in 1841 it had reached 109, besides apprentices; of this number two-thirds were receiving parish relief, or working on the roads. By forming a union and limiting the hours of daily labour to eight, they had succeeded in finding employment for all their men, of whom two-thirds were *fully* employed.

The delegate of the sawmakers stated that in March, 1844, his trade was in a very bad state. They had then in Union 210 men, of whom 186 were wholly or partially employed, and twenty-four were supported "on the box" (*i.e.* out of the funds of the Society). By restricting the hours of labour they had made employment for 256 out of 265 members, at the expense of a payment of from 15 to 20 per cent. out of their wages.

Two years ago, the fork makers and grinders were in great distress. By forming a union, and restricting the hours of labour to six hours a day, they were able to earn living wages.

To the assertion of the masters that the unions were driving away trade from Sheffield by their restrictions, the delegates replied that the trade of Sheffield was being ruined through the discredit thrown on it by the spurious articles which the masters made, with forged names and marks, of which some specimens were brought and exhibited to the meeting.

On both sides in these discussions the reasoning *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, seems to have been freely employed. The fallacy of attributing to a single influence that which in reality is the result of a great variety of influences, and especially of assigning the *fluctuations* of trade to a *permanent and scarcely varying cause*,—whether the restriction of hands, or the frauds of unprincipled employers,—scarcely requires pointing out.

The Sheffield Manufacturers and Tradesmen's Protection Society, to which reference has been made, does not seem to have been inactive. Complaints were made by the men that in the prosecutions instituted by the Society against alleged offenders, the testimony of the lowest witnesses was received, whom even the constables said they would not believe on their oaths. The masters were charged with inaugurating a system of terrorism. A meeting of trades' delegates was held on June the 5th, 1845, to consider the course they should take on this matter. As a sample of the proceedings on the part of the Protection Society, of which the men complained, the following case may be related. A member of a union having remonstrated with another for violating the rules of the trade, by working on the Tuesday afternoon, the latter complained to the Protection Society, who caused the offender to be dragged from his bed at two o'clock in the morning and lodged in prison. When the case should have come on before the magistrates, the complainant did not appear. The masters thereupon declared (untruly as the men alleged) that he had been tampered with and kept away by the Union. This, of course, is simply the account given by the men. It may be correct

or mistaken. The following resolution was passed by the meeting of trades' delegates:

"That a consolidation of all the trades in Sheffield is called for to repel by all legal and moral means the unjustifiable attacks made on the part of a body calling itself, 'the Manufacturers and Tradesmen's Protection Society,' and to protect those members of the trades who may be assailed by that body in their efforts to promote by legal and moral means the welfare of their respective trades."

A committee of seven, with power to add to their number, was formed to carry out the foregoing resolutions by drawing up rules for the organization of the trades.

What, or whether any, measures immediately followed, I am unable to state. I find, however, that more than a year later, in October, 1846, there was a meeting of the trades' delegates, at which some of the speakers made reference to a recent meeting of the employers at the Cutler's Hall, at which the following resolution had been passed:—

"That steps be taken for the purpose of inquiring into the causes of these diabolical outrages, inducing a spirit of confidence and good feeling between masters and workmen, and establishing the supremacy of law."

The appointment of a committee consisting of equal numbers of masters and workmen, for the purpose of carrying the above resolution into effect, was recommended.

This meeting was followed by one of the trades' delegates, who resolved:—

"That it is the opinion of this meeting, that a protection society for the defence of labour's rights is imperatively called for, in the present artificial state of society in this town, and that the various trades be earnestly requested collectively to form themselves into one union, and that a contribution of ½*d.* a head be paid by every person of each trade."

By another resolution a secretary and committee were appointed "to keep a watchful eye on the oppressions of capitalists and the Legislature," and with power of calling a meeting of the trades when they might deem it necessary.

The proposal for the appointment of a joint committee of four masters and four workmen was acted upon, and many meetings and discussions took place, extending from November 12, 1846, to January 13, 1847. They had no practical result; one resolution, it is true, was formally carried, since it received the votes of its proposer and seconder, while the other members of the committee abstained from voting, recommending that an application be made to Parliament for the amendment of the Act 6 Geo. IV. c. 96, in a sense, of course, unfriendly to the combinations of working men. Two hundred delegates of trades' societies met to protest against any such step being taken, and T. A. Ward, Esq., with whom, as umpire, the decision on this point had been left, having regard to the expressed feeling of the artisans, determined against the application, which,

there is every reason to believe, was as little desired by the great body of the masters as by the operatives. The joint committee was at once dissolved, to the satisfaction, it is said, of all the members of it.

From the foregoing statement, the action of the trades' societies of Sheffield, collectively, as representative of the labouring classes of the place, in their relations to the employers as a body, may be understood. A detailed history of each particular union, if the materials existed for writing it, would exceed the limits at my disposal. I therefore confine myself to some account of two of the principal trades, which may be taken as types and samples of the rest; one of them perhaps the most united and powerful, the other the weakest and least united of the trades of Sheffield,—I refer to the file trade, and to the spring-knife trade. And first of the former, respecting which, the facts to be mentioned have been drawn from an examination of Sheffield newspapers for a succession of years. If somewhat unconnected—and, in the absence of assistance from the present representatives of the trade, I am unable to supply the thread of continuous narrative which should connect them—these facts are sufficiently numerous to be illustrative, and will, perhaps, leave as true an impression of the conduct and operations of the trade as a more systematic account would do.

In the year 1829, certain masters in this trade attempted to reduce the wages of the men in their employment a penny in the shilling; other masters, and those the most respectable, opposed the reduction as unnecessary. Much ill-feeling was excited by the dismissal of men without proper notice, and successful actions were brought against employers who had taken this step. Some employers, giving proper notice, refused to supply the men during the unexpired term of service with work sufficient for their maintenance. The men also it must be stated in some cases left their work without the proper notice. A magistrate before whom some of these charges were brought, not obscurely implied his sense of the merits of the quarrel, by "entreating the masters, if they could in justice to themselves, to raise the scale, or meet the men half way," assuring them that to do so "would be for their ultimate good, and for the public peace." The strike lasted four months. The number of the turnouts was 400. They occasionally paraded the streets in bodies, making collections from the passers-by. In the end, the men accepted a price intermediate between that which they had first demanded, and that which the masters had offered.

The filesmiths seem to have been impressed, by these and subsequent occurrences, with the necessity of forming and maintaining a strong union. At a meeting held in the autumn of 1830, they agreed upon the following resolutions:—(1) "We are of opinion that any filesmith applying to the overseers of the poor for parochial relief has a direct tendency to reduce wages, because he is sent by them to any master, at such prices as he may think fit to give. (2) That each member of the Union pay 1*s.* a week for the sup-

port of such of those workmen as may be out of employment. (3) That any member withholding payment of his subscription for three months *shall receive such punishment as the trade may think proper*, unless his subscription be then paid." William Mills was unfortunate enough to incur the undefined penalties of Rule 3. He was seized by a number of men, carried to an inn, where an apron was wrapped around his head and face, and then "laid upon a board and 'saw-webbed,' in the presence of about a hundred workmen. . . . It was contended on the part of the defendants that the complainant had agreed to the above resolutions, and that he had not only agreed to, but proposed the third resolution." The defendants, to the number of eight, were fined ten shillings each, and dismissed with a caution. Neither the fine nor the caution seems to have produced much effect. A few months later, towards the end of December, two hundred filesmiths visited a shop where three men were suspected of working under the statement, seized one of them, carried him to their usual house of assembly, assaulting him by the way, and placed him at one end of a large room, with three candles burning near him, while all the others remained at the opposite end of the room without lights. While in this situation he was made to confess, through fear, that he had done wrong in working for his employers, and to declare that he would never work for them again.—(*Sheffield Iris*, Dec. 28, 1830.) The defendants were committed for trial at Doncaster Assizes.

Passing over an intermediate period, we come to the year 1836, which is remarkable for a protracted and memorable dispute between the masters and journeymen of this trade. In November, 1835, the journeymen prepared a statement of wages higher than had ever before been given, going beyond that of 1814, and sent a copy of it to each master, with a notification that the new scale was to come into operation on the 1st of February, 1836. The masters prepared a counter-statement to be submitted to the journeymen, which is described as rather a regulation than an advance of prices, since only those articles were raised in price which were considered to be lower in proportion than the rest. They further demanded that all the restrictions hitherto enforced by the Union should be abandoned, and announced their intention of taking each as many apprentices as he might think proper, though, other things being equal, the preference should be given to sons of journeymen. The masters further engaged, one with the other, that "if the workmen of any of their number refused to work at the scale proposed, they would all close their manufactories, and would render pecuniary assistance to any of their neighbours who might be struck against, and who might be unable otherwise to hold out till their workmen should agree to their terms."

The struggle began early in February, though a few masters still kept their manufactories open. The contest was embittered by actions brought by workmen against the masters for discharging them, and by masters against workmen for leaving their employment,

without the usual notice. With a view to the accommodation of differences, a conference was held on February 16th, between three master file manufacturers and three journeymen in the same trade, in the presence of two magistrates, who advised both parties as follows :—

"It is recommended, after hearing both sides, that the journeymen do give up and abandon all the rules and regulations they have hitherto acted upon among themselves, for regulating and restricting the number of apprentices to be employed in the trade, as being contrary to the spirit of the laws, and evidently destructive of the freedom and prosperity of the trade.

"And it is recommended by the magistrates to the masters with equal earnestness, that (on the recommendation to the journeymen being complied with) each party should appoint a deputation forthwith, to adjust and settle the scale of wages."

This advice, as may be supposed, entirely met the views of the master file manufacturers; and at a meeting shortly afterwards held, they hastened to proclaim their acceptance of it by unanimously passing a resolution adopting it, and appointing a committee of twelve to regulate the scale of wages.

The following address also was signed by about 120 masters :—

"We, the undersigned merchants, manufacturers, and other inhabitants of Sheffield, being deeply interested in the trade and prosperity of this town, view with alarm the systematic unions entered into by the workmen in most of the principal branches of the cutlery and other trades, and in particular the pending conflict between the masters and men in the file trades. The restrictive regulations adopted by the Union, in reference to the number of workmen and apprentices to be employed, also the exorbitant prices demanded, must, if complied with, eventually drive the trade from the town, and bring the families of the infatuated workmen to poverty and want, if not firmly and successfully resisted.

"We, therefore, hereby record our unqualified approbation of the firm and decided stand which the majority of the file manufacturers are now making, and urge the absolute necessity of the most persevering and untiring opposition, till the men have acceded to the just and reasonable recommendation of the magistrates."

Several circumstances occurred to embitter the quarrel. The men's strike, as we have seen, had been met by a masters' lock-out. But there were many men who were not in a position to strike, and whom their employers were not fairly in a position to lock-out. These were men who were at work on written engagements for a specified period. Some of those men were discharged without notice, and appealed to the magistrates, who decided in their favour. There were instances, it should be added, of similar breaches of agreement on the part of the men. For those not under contract, it was contended that the demand in November, 1835, of an advance to be granted in the February following, formed a sufficient notice.

On the 15th of February, a deputation of ten workmen met ten

master manufacturers at the Cutlers' Hall, to discuss with them their points of difference, and the means of arriving at an amicable arrangement. One of the working men stated that they were willing to relax, but could not entirely abandon, their restrictions. There were six hundred workmen in the file trade; they were prepared to take three hundred apprentices. At the request of the employers, the deputation withdrew; and in their absence, the masters passed the following resolutions:—

"That providing the workmen annihilate all the rules and regulations which restrict the freedom of the file trade, and that they immediately re-commence work on the same terms as when the strike took place, the masters will re-consider the list of prices within one month; that it shall receive the signatures of all the masters in the file trade, who shall pledge themselves to observe the same, and be considered binding on all parties; that any infringement of the list shall be reported to them and remonstrated with; and that two forgers and two cutlers shall meet a deputation of the masters for the purpose of arranging the same."

This resolution having been presented to the deputation of workmen, was by them submitted, on the evening of the same day, to the body of their trade, by whom it was resolved:—

"1. That this meeting is of opinion that our rules and regulations, as regards apprentices, are too limited, and consequently, will admit of such alteration as the great demand for goods now requires.

"2. That while this meeting is anxious to relieve the trade from the above limitations, it is at the same time aware that to throw the trade entirely open would be productive of the most disastrous consequences to the journeymen at large, inasmuch as it would be the means of overstocking the trade with hands, and thereby reducing the general statement of prices.

"3. That this meeting is determined to adhere to the statement presented by the journeymen, unless some reasonable objection can be shown to the Society."

The masters rejoined in the following resolution:—

"That it is the determination of this meeting, that until the workmen accede to the proposition of throwing open the file trade, no further conference can be held with them."

They added that the Masters' Committee continued to sit every day, and would be glad to hear from the workmen, when they had accepted their resolution,—to which, however, they who passed it did not long adhere.

On the 19th of February, it was proposed by the men at the Town Hall, in the presence of the magistrates, that they should return to work provisionally on the old prices, and that the masters should meet them in friendly discussion of their demands,—the resolution of the masters refusing to do so until all trade restrictions had been abolished, being first rescinded. It was determined, accordingly, that a conference should be held at the Cutlers' Hall, between six workmen and six employers.

The journeymen now found it necessary to solicit pecuniary aid; the town was canvassed by them, and upwards of £3000 was raised.

On Friday, February 26th, resolutions were passed by a committee of the Chamber of Commerce, condemning the strike. Two or three days after, the organized trades (to the number of twenty) met, and unanimously resolved:—

"That this meeting highly approves of the conduct of the journeymen filesmiths, and hereby determines to support them, individually and collectively, all that lies in their power."

An attempt was now made by the masters to procure hands from elsewhere. By an advertisement which was inserted in *Aris's Birmingham Gazette*, young men who understood the file trade were invited to come to Sheffield. The expectations, if any were sanguinely entertained, as to the results of this advertisement were disappointed. For on the 18th of March a meeting of manufacturers and merchants, specially convened by a committee of the Chamber of Commerce, was held at the Cutlers' Hall, when the following resolutions, among others, were passed:—

"(3.) That as workmen co-operate, and as the journeymen filesmiths have been assisted by other unions, it is necessary for manufacturers, and especially for those engaged in the file trade, to unite, and that this meeting strongly urges the necessity of those manufacturers whose men are embodied in unions to meet and confer together without loss of time, on the propriety of giving their men a monthly notice."

"(2.) That as a number of manufacturers in the file trade are carrying on their business to the great injury of the file-makers generally and of the town, it is strongly recommended by this meeting that all merchants should desist from purchasing files from such manufacturers, and that they be respectfully requested not to contribute to the prolongation of a conflict which has suspended one of the most flourishing branches of our manufactures, but that they abstain from giving out any more orders for files till the present contest is terminated."

"(5.) That this meeting learns, with inexpressible surprise, that some manufacturers of files have extensively engaged, and are now actually employing, the workmen of other manufacturers whose operations are suspended by the present strike, and are thereby enriching themselves by means of a strike which not only threatens the destruction or removal of the file trade, but is fraught with injury to the town."

By the 6th resolution, thanks are voted to the Chamber of Commerce, for the interest it has shown in behalf of the master file makers; and merchants and manufacturers are invited to become members of the chamber, as a body which aims to "protect and extend manufacturing interests."

Resolution 7 returns acknowledgments for subscriptions to the amount of £3000, and declares that, as the town has been imperfectly canvassed, a collection will be made at the close of the meeting.

By the 8th resolution, the inhabitants of Sheffield are requested to withhold pecuniary aid and countenance from the journeymen filesmiths.

The 9th resolution expresses regret that master filemakers who have pledged themselves not to employ workmen from other establishments, should continue to do so.—*Sheffield Independent, March* 19, 1836.

The *Independent* of the week following announces that negotiations have been resumed between the artisans and their employers, on the basis of a modification (not a total repeal) of the existing restrictions on the freedom of the trade.

These negotiations not proving immediately successful, a meeting was held of delegates from the different trades, who pledged themselves to continue to the workmen the most strenuous support.

On the 19th of April, the *Sheffield Independent* announces that the strike is at an end. The workmen obtained a substantial advance, though not to the extent they had demanded. On the other hand, they conceded certain relaxations of the restrictions unnecessarily impeding the freedom of their trade, as very early in the strike they had undertaken to do, though declining to throw it entirely open, or abandon the Union. In a final address, the workmen gratefully acknowledge the assistance rendered them by the members of the various trades, not only in Sheffield but also in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Manchester, Warrington, and Leeds. They thank the masters for the courtesy with which they have been met by them in conference, and express a hope that amicable feelings will be restored and permanent between employers and employed.

The list established as the result of this strike remained in force for many years.

In 1842, the secretary of the file trade stated that during the period of distress, which was at its height in that year, the manufacturers had continued to pay the prices of 1836 for all work done. In 1845, in the course of the discussion with Mr. Ward, the same person stated that no dispute on the subject of wages had occurred since the strike of 1836, though there might have been some "underhand nibbling" at prices. In 1846 there was an advance of wages; but in 1848 the trade again was in a very distressed condition, and some of its members made application for parochial assistance. At a meeting of the trade shortly afterwards (April 19), it was unanimously resolved that the men should be withdrawn from the parish, and that the funds raised for the payment of funerals should be directed to their support. The reason for this step was, that although the great body of respectable manufacturers were in favour of the existing statement, yet some of the masters were meditating an attack upon it. It was asserted that during the preceding six months, £400 had been expended by the file trade in support of such of its members as were out of work.

In 1853, the workmen in the file trade succeeded in obtaining, after a short controversy, another advance of wages. The masters,

after holding two meetings, at which they unanimously resolved "that the advance, in the present state of the trade, is at variance with its true interests, and shall be resisted," held a third, at which they determined to concede it. The high hand with which the journeymen carried matters is shown by the following extract from a paragraph in which a local journal states the fact of the concession: "The men held a meeting and issued a circular, on Monday, in which they announced that some of the men to whom the advance had been given had received a month's notice, and if at the end of the month they were thrown out, they would not return to work till their expenses had been paid by the employers. It was also agreed, that if the men out on the 25th were not re-engaged before the 28th of July, they would not resume work till the masters had paid their expenses. It is stated that, in some cases, the men have been fined for working contrary to the rules of the trade, and seized their goods or tools to compel payment." (*Independent*, Aug. 6, 1853.)

The flourishing condition of the trade is shown by the fact, that at this time the Union resolved on returning to every member of the trade the sum of 20*s.* per man, and 6*s.* per boy. This statement is made in the same number of the same journal as that from which the extract just quoted has been taken. A similar repayment had been made in 1852.

In November, 1853, the men determined on another advance, acknowledging at the same time a deficiency of artisans in the trade, and the necessity of supplying that deficiency. A conviction of the necessity seems to have been forced upon them by the "illegal" attempts made to meet it. In a letter published in the *Independent*, after acknowledging that "the harvest in the file trade has of late been so numerous as to require a greater number of hands to reap it," the writer goes on to add: "there is no doubt but if the trade had been honestly and uprightly applied to, that it would have allowed an inlet sufficient to have met all cases. But there are in the file trade, as there are in all trades, men who for a trifling gain have no scruples at overstepping reason and rule, and these men have without any solicitation or sanction taken to themselves and instructed what are considered illegal boys, that is, boys who are not the sons of freemen filesmiths." These offenders are charged with ill-treating the boys, with a view of getting their indentures broken, and new apprentices bound. On Tuesday, January 2nd, the file trade resolved to give a month's notice to their employers, of a new statement of prices, amounting on the average to an advance of ten per cent. on the (then) existing rate of wages,—an advance which, "taken in connexion with the increased price of fuel and materials," would involve, the masters alleged, a diminution, by "at least ten per cent., of the discount allowed to their customers."

On the 16th of the same month, the trade resolved to postpone the advance demanded until the 3rd of April, and passed resolutions, "That the men from Birmingham and other towns shall be admitted into the trade of Sheffield, subject to paying any sum that the Exe-

cutive and General Committee shall think proper according to circumstances . . . and that the trade is fully prepared to consider the question of admitting a limited number of boys into the trade."

After repeated meetings of workmen and employers, and the canvassing of counter-propositions, the following terms, agreed to by the journeymen on the 2nd of February, were presented to, and accepted by, the manufacturers.

"That every journeyman, of thirty years of age, not having a boy, girl, or wife, working, shall be enabled to take an apprentice. This was passed with a view to its being a permanent rule, if the trade should continue good; and it was resolved that it should come into operation in the gradual way the manufacturers suggested—100 boys to be taken in April,* by the men qualified in accordance with the previous resolution, the individuals who should have them being selected by ballot. It is, therefore, to be a custom, if trade shall continue good, for every journeyman, thirty years old, not having a member of his family working, to take an apprentice.

"2. In case of there being a scarcity of forgers, they are to be taken from the strikers.

"3. The journeymen agree to instruct one apprentice for each partner in the firm. It is explained that this resolution does not set aside the original right of each master to take two apprentices, though that is partially nullified by the men refusing to instruct [more than one of] them. A deputation from the men met the manufacturers at the Cutler's Hall (on Friday, Feb. 3rd), when a resolution was adopted accepting as satisfactory the terms stated in the resolutions of the journeymen, and agreeing to pay the new scale of prices in April next."—*Sheffield Independent*, February 4th, 1854.

I am not aware whether any strikes have occurred in the file trade since the date of that just described.

Previous to the passing of these rules, file forgers and cutters were allowed at the age of twenty-five to take an apprentice, who must be the son of a freeman filesmith. A second boy might be taken when the journeyman was thirty. Masters were allowed two apprentices, whom, however, the journeymen refused to teach. But owing to the limitation of the privilege of apprenticeship to the sons of freemen, many journeymen could not obtain apprentices. Boys above sixteen years of age might not be employed at certain descriptions of work, which were deemed too easy for them, and likely, if protracted, to interfere with their improvement. This it was said greatly interfered with the conduct of business, and led to the delay of orders, the manufacturers not being able to obtain additional apprentices.†

The employment of women in certain branches of the file trade

* The masters proposed that 300 new apprentices should be taken, 100 in April, 100 six months later, and 100 in twelve months.

† See a paper read before the Sheffield Mechanics' Institute, by Mr. Henry Turner, on the manufacture of files, *Sheffield Independent*, Oct. 30, 1852, also *Independent*, Nov. 17, 1852.

has always been strenuously resisted. In 1844 an attempt was made to prohibit it altogether. The attempt was unsuccessful. It was, however, renewed in 1847. In that year, out of 200 women and girls employed, 173 were the wives and daughters of workmen. At first, it was determined that all female hands should be summarily excluded; but this resolution was afterwards modified by the concession to widows and orphans of leave to work. A fine of £3 was imposed on all who should allow their wives and daughters to cut files after a certain date; and another fine of £3 was imposed on all persons who should whet or grind chisels for female file cutters, being the wives or daughters of workmen, the informer in each case to have half the penalty. The masters, and some even of the workmen, resisted these resolutions; and a compromise was ultimately effected, by which it was agreed that women should be excluded from what was (by usage) "men's work." This limitation of women's work does not seem to have been effectual; for, in 1851, a committee of twenty-one members of the trade was appointed to ascertain the number of women working, "married and unmarried, legal and illegal"; and afterwards another committee of four to devise means of confining the women to particular kinds of work.

I extract from the *Independent* of May 19, 1849, the following statement of the policy and operations of the Filesmiths' Union. It must be taken, of course, with the qualifications which the fact of its proceeding from the officers of the Union will suggest to every reader.

"We are indebted, for the facts we have to state about the file trade, to some of the officers of the Filesmiths' Union. This is one of the largest and best conducted of the unions. The policy of its most influential members has been to maintain amicable relations between the men and their employers, and they have succeeded to a remarkable extent. The Union contains 2000 workmen, in and about Sheffield. They are divided into seventeen districts, eleven in the town and six in the villages. There is also in connexion with the Union a district at Manchester, containing 100 men; and one at Newburn, near Newcastle, containing some twenty-five members. In the spring of 1847, the Union possessed a fund of nearly £5000, and at that time all their hands were employed. During the summer, trade began to slacken, and six, twelve, and twenty men have weekly needed aid from the fund. As autumn came on, things grew worse, and the stock became reduced. At first, the rate of contribution by members to the fund was sixpence a week for each man, and twopence for boys. This rate being found insufficient, was doubled for those moderately employed, and quadrupled for those in full employment. But that being still inadequate to the emergency, a general meeting of the trade resolved to contribute 1½*d.* in the shilling out of each man's earnings. This Union has paid to unemployed members, in twenty months, from 16th September, 1847, to May, 1849, no less than £16,980. They have had as many as 530, about a fourth of the whole number, unemployed and chargeable to the funds at

one time. The number is now reduced to about 330. The greatest amount they have paid to the unemployed in one week was on the 6th January, 1849; since that time the amount has decreased, so that last Saturday they paid only £152 0*s*. 5*d*., and it is expected that the payments of this week will be £10 or £11 less. The rate of contributions by members to the fund has now been reduced from 1½*d*. to 1*d*. in the shilling. In addition to these contributions, 1*d*. per head is paid for each funeral of a member or his wife. So completely does the trade provide for the members, that there are not more than ten or twelve men belonging to the trade who are chargeable to the Unions of Sheffield and Ecclesal, and these are persons who have not complied with the rules of the Union. . . . Private persons, during the period of depression, have lent to the trade more than £500, with no further security than the simple acknowledgment of the secretary that they had received the money for the use of the trade. . . . We are informed that the affairs of this trade are managed in a very economical manner. Each district has its committee meeting every Monday to receive the contributions of its members, and to pay over the money to the general committee, consisting of three members and two secretaries (one member being changed every month in rotation, so that no member remains in office longer than three months). The general committee meets each Monday to receive the money from the districts, and each Saturday to disburse it to the members unemployed. The business of the intermediate days, unless under peculiar circumstances, is transacted by the secretaries. By this arrangement the charges for management are kept at the *minimum*. Every month, a balance-sheet of income and expenditure is made out and communicated to the members of the trade. A general quarterly meeting is held, at which auditors are appointed to examine the monthly financial statements of the preceding three months, and report upon them to the next meeting. The district committees sit at various public-houses, but the business of the central committee is transacted at a private office which they occupy in Coal Pit Lane; in premises connected with this office, the unemployed members of the town districts meet in portions twice a day, so arranged that each man answers to the roll-call once in two days. This arrangement affords great facilities when trade is improving, and when daily applications are made at the office of the committee for hands, to meet those applications promptly. It has been a most just complaint against some unions that they interfered with the right of masters to choose what men they would employ, and required them to take such as might happen to have been longest chargeable to the fund. We are assured that nothing of the sort is done in this trade. If a master wants a particular man who is out of employ, that man is found and sent to the master, whether he be wanted for regular employment or for a casual job; and so good is the understanding between the masters and the officers of the Union, that it is very common, if the master have no particular choice as to an individual, to

describe the qualities of the man he wants and leave the Union to recommend the person. The file trade have had the good fortune to pass through the trying times they have had to endure without suffering disruption of the existing agreement between themselves and their employers as to the rate of wages. In October last, a revision of the prices for some of the extra paid articles was prepared by the masters and agreed to by the men, after some resistance on the part of the forgers, whom it principally affected, and who withdrew for a few weeks from the Union. It is to the credit of this Union that, without violence to property or person, but by a moderate and conciliatory policy, a kindly feeling has been preserved between the employers and the employed amid circumstances of great difficulty and suffering. . . . We may add that the Union does not confine itself to the relief of the unemployed. Men unable to work on account of age have 1*s.* 6*d.* a week if single, and 2*s.* if married. Funeral money to the amount of £5 is paid on the death of a member or his wife, and of £1 on the death of a youth who had begun to work; with the gratuitous use of various articles necessary for funerals. The funerals of children of men out of employ are generally provided for by a voluntary contribution among the men according to their circumstances. This is the case of the Union, not overcharged, though no doubt things might be set down on the contra side."

Part of the per contra side of the file-makers' account is implied in some of the statements that have preceded. The following facts exhibit heavier items to the discredit of the Union.

In May, 1830, Mr. Ibbotson, of the Globe Works, discharged from his employment some members of the file trade, whom he believed to be of loose character. In July the remaining forgers turned out, by order, as they said, of the committee of their Union, and with a view of compelling the re-employment of the men dismissed. Not succeeding, they turned in again. Soon after, a bottle, containing gunpowder, which, however, did not explode, was thrown through the window of the manager of the file department. Many of the workmen were attacked in the same way; but they adopted the precaution of placing blankets before their windows, and the bottles rebounded into the streets, and there exploded. On the 30th of September, an iron pipe, charged with powder was put through a window at the Globe Works, and fired by a fuse. The attempt failed; but a reward of £1000 was offered for the detection of the intending perpetrator of the outrage. On the following day, a notice, in these words, was posted on the gates of the Globe Works:—

"If I have to visit you again, I shall make sure, when life may be sacrificed; but if such should be the case, then their blood will be upon his own head."

The secretary of the file trade stated, that Mr. Ibbotson had made frequent attempts to reduce prices below the list of 1836, and was in the habit of refusing to employ men sent him by the Board of Guardians, unless they would work for less than that statement.

In August, 1854, a tin bottle, holding about a pint of gunpowder,

and with a lighted fuse attached, was thrown at night, through the window, into the bedroom of William Wass, file-grinder, of 283, Allen Street. He succeeded in throwing it into the street, where it exploded harmlessly. Wass had for some time, under peculiar circumstances, been allowed by the Union one more than the regular number of apprentices, on condition of his paying an increased contribution—though, of late, the Union had refused his subscription. He had three weeks before, to supply the place of one of the apprentices, who was ill, engaged a journeyman from Lancashire. The journeyman had not served an apprenticeship to the trade. To this circumstance, though Wass was not aware of it, he attributed the outrage, and forthwith discharged the workman.

Other cases might be added to these; but those which have been given sufficiently serve the purpose of illustration. The circumstantial evidence does not amount to legal proof of the complicity of the Union in these outrages; but it certainly involves it in something more than grave suspicion. It cannot be doubted, that unions so powerful as those of the file trades, could, if they chose to use their influence in that direction, effectually discountenance offences such as the above, and aid in the detection of those concerned in them.

The history of the *Penknife trade* is in marked contrast with that of the file trade. In 1859 it was not in union; and except at intervals, and for short periods, it never has been so. In 1810 a statement of prices was agreed on between the masters and men in this branch, and signed by the magistrates. In 1814 the men struck, and obtained an advance of from 10 to 25 per cent. Trade began to decline in 1817, and in 1820 the spring-knife cutlers were in great distress, though they had paid not less than £4000 per annum, in order to maintain their statement. In an address published by them in 1829, they complain that "the master manufacturers take off from 25 to 50 per cent. from the prices of 1810, leaving their earnings only from 9*s.* to 11*s.* per week." In 1831 a new statement was agreed on, which, though an advance upon the actual rate of wages, was 25 per cent. below that of 1810. To maintain wages the penknife grinders about this time formed a union, the rules of which were very rigid. No workman could take an apprentice until he was twenty-eight years of age. He could not take a second apprentice until the former was eighteen years of age.

In 1835 and 1836 this usually depressed trade shared the prosperity then general at Sheffield; and though it had ceased to be in union, it obtained an advance of prices, gaining in some cases the wages of 1814. In 1837 trade was again slack. From that date onward the penknife cutlers were in great distress. In 1842 the grinders in this branch asked for an advance, and in an appeal to the public gave an account of their sufferings, and of the causes to which they attributed them. After asserting that the list they ask for is from 15 to 20 per cent. under the statement of 1831 ("the most reasonable statement ever agreed to by any class of workmen"), they go on to say:—"At this moment there are many of our members

that have no tools to work with, but are under the necessity of working with any one who will find them wheel room and tools to work with, and even under these humiliating circumstances have not the means of paying the necessary expense, which will at least amount to 5*s.* or 6*s.* per week. The amount of debt contracted in this way is very great. In the next place, those who have wheel room and tools are generally involved in debt, so much so that if the proprietors of the various wheels were to make a distraint, we should, with very few exceptions, be without tools to work with. As a proof of the truth of the above statement, we will state the amount of arrears owing by pen-blade grinders alone at three or four wheels. At the first, £250; at another, upwards of £300; at the third, £500; and at the last we shall mention, £1000. So that at four wheels the arrears of rent owing at this moment are above £2000; and could all the arrears owing at the different wheels be ascertained, they would, we believe, amount to several thousands more. And then it is a well-known fact, the great majority are greatly in debt to shopkeepers and almost every other person with whom we have to do, without the least apparent prospect of ever being able to extricate ourselves."

They describe the causes of these evils in the following terms:—

"In 1831, there were no articles that could be called useless; there were many that were common, as always was the case, but they were well fitted for the object that was intended, not excepting the Wadsley *flat-back*. About 1831, the commonest blades began to be polished; and the demand for them has continued to increase, articles thus got up having a finished appearance, being in fact, an imitation of fine cutlery. Competition, however, in the production of these imitative articles has now been carried to such an extent, that the prices for grinding them are reduced so low that they cannot be ground to be useful, or fitted for the purpose desired. To such an awful degree is the production of these absolutely useless articles carried, that they leave neither profit to the respectable manufacturer, wages to the artisan, nor utility to the purchaser. We have ascertained that, at this moment, the knives of this kind made weekly contain 108,000 blades. The prices for making these sham articles, in 1831, were low, being regarded as extremely common, but even these prices are now reduced 50, 60, and in some cases 75 per cent.—But while there are many manufacturers imposing on the poorer classes, at home as well as abroad, it is an act of justice to state that there are some firms who abstain from such impositions, and one at least who has not made a single spring-knife, known in the trade by the term *crasher*. The amount of knives manufactured at this time exceeds that of any former period, but in value is vastly less than in 1836."

Dr. Holland, who quotes this address in a pamphlet published about the time of its appearance,* states: "Of the 319 workmen in

* *The Mortality, Suffering, and Diseases of Grinders. Part II. Penknife Grinders.* By G. Calvert Holland, M.D. Sheffield and London. 1842.

this branch, 41 are paid wholly or partly in stuff, and a short time ago a much greater proportion."

In 1843, the various branches of the spring-knife trade, including the hafters, forgers, grinders, and spring-makers, who had hitherto had their separate combinations, united in a society, to which they gave the name of "The Mutual Aid." In an address published by the committee of this society, and dated October 19, 1843, they refer to the fact, that "no misunderstanding or dispute exists between the respectable employers and their workmen;" and state that, "on the contrary, promises of support have been made by some of the most influential manufacturers." They then proceed to enumerate the evils to which they attribute their present "proverbially degraded" condition, and which, with the countenance of some of the most considerable employers, they intend to combat.

"Among these evils," they say, "those of false marking, and the manufacture of cheap and trashy articles, are the most prominent and baneful. To the former, the attention of a respectable and honourable company has very properly been directed,—the only regret is, that it should have been so long delayed. The latter evil is one . . . to remedy which the committee are about to use their best efforts, and to enable them to do so effectively is the object of the present appeal. . . .

"In the spring-knife trade, during the last few years, a class of manufacturers have arisen, who, without capital or correct moral principles to regulate their conduct, have commenced a system of dishonourable competition with the respectable masters. To enable them to do so, the wages of the workmen have been reduced—the articles manufactured have been deteriorated in quality as well as reduced in price; these have been introduced into an already overstocked market, clogging up every avenue, deceiving the customer by substituting an inferior for a genuine article, bringing disgrace upon themselves, and ruin upon the town and its manufactures."

They conclude by expressing the conviction that "unless something is done . . . the reproach which has been heaped upon us by foreigners, on account of the inferior and trashy articles which have been sent abroad, and the efforts which they are now making to perfect their own manufactures, will eventually shut us out of the markets of the world."

What were the specific measures devised by the committee of the "Mutual Aid," I am unable to state. The subsequent history of the trade shows that they did not effect the object sought by them.

In June, 1848, the spring-knife grinders established a Protection Union, designed "to protect each member's labour and working tools, and to provide for the decent interment of the members and their wives." A copy of the rules is before me. Those regulating the conduct of the business and the administration of the funds of the society need not be quoted here. The following are worth extracting:—

"7. That the town be divided into two divisions, north and south; and each division into three districts; and each district sending (*sic*) two members to form the committee.

"10. That each member pay his money weekly to the person appointed by the district where he works; and he shall pay off, monthly, all arrears and funerals, or for neglecting to do so he shall be written to, and not be allowed to work until the same is discharged, without the consent of the district which he belongs to.

"18. All apprentices that have attained the age of twenty-one, that have served a legal apprenticeship to the spring-knife grinding business, shall be permitted to enter this society, and receive all the advantages in four weeks after the entrance money is paid.

"21. The master of any boy, dying, who has been a member of this society up to the time of his death, leaving a wife or family, they shall have the preference of the boy to any other person until such boy is of age.

"22. That this society deprecate all methods of compulsion to get men to join this Union; but the committee hope the advantages arising from the Union are sufficient to induce all the trade to join.

"25. That each district have a committee of its own, to examine into cases of dispute that may occur amongst them, and settle the same. They shall have the power to call in the help of the whole district; to collect money; or settle any other business that affects only their own district. N.B.—District fines belong to the district, and general fines go to the box.

"26. No journeyman to be allowed to work as such, except they have the consent of the district or its committee.

"27. Any man working with another man, or on tools not his own, the person belonging to the tools shall pay, or cause him to pay, while he works with him.

"28. No person to take in a journeyman from another district, or find him work or tools, without a note from the last district or secretary.

"29. Each man in this Union shall have his employer's name entered in the book kept for this purpose; or such employer wanting men to work for him shall have such men only as have already been entered."

The existence of the following rule seems to point to an evil of frequent occurrence:—

"13. Any person coming before the committee in a state of intoxication with any complaint, the same shall not be noticed until he is sober."

It is further provided that—

"No religious or political questions [shall be] entertained in meetings of the society; *but* all the members are required to be orderly, peaceable, and pay the strictest attention to business while assembled. That there be no confusion in our meetings, or the spirit of envy

entertained against each other; but to let the spirit of love rule our members."

Rule 24 states—"That as the life of grinders is more uncertain than most trades, we combine with this union a funeral gift,"* to which only members of the Protection Union were admitted.

The penknife grinders were unable to retain permanently the unequivocal advantages of this fund, or the more controverted benefits of their Protection Union.

In 1847-48, following the example of the edge-tool grinders, the Britannia metal smiths, and the file hardeners, they took a piece of land. No balance-sheet was published, but the loss was understood to be considerable.†

For the last thirty years, I am informed, the table-knife grinders have not been so united as to affect the prices of labour; in 1857, they attempted to re-combine. The annexed address shows that the effort has been protracted up to the present time, and is still being continued; it has hitherto been but imperfectly, if at all, successful:—

"*To the Spring-Knife Cutlers.*

"Fellow-workmen,—The committee, along with yourselves, have long felt the necessity of some tangible proposition being brought forward by which the trade might recover from the hopeless depression to which it has long been reduced. Various suggestions and efforts have from time to time been put forth, but with little effect; and, indeed, you are aware that not much can be accomplished by the small contribution which has hitherto been levied; yet we make bold to assert that if every man in the trade had contributed, all the objects you seek to accomplish would now have been attained; nevertheless, as there are many minds and various and conflicting interests to encounter, the committee have determined, with your concurrence, to advance the contribution to 3*d.* per week, and, with the sum so collected, to submit the following propositions as a basis for future operations:—

"1. An allowance, per scale, to unemployed members.

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* In Dr. Holland's pamphlet, before referred to, the result of elaborate statistical tables, is thus condensed:—

"160 out of 1000 deaths, above 20 years of age, die in the kingdom between 20 and 29; in Sheffield, 184; but in this branch [the penknife grinders], 402. In the next period, between 30 and 39, in the kingdom at large, the deaths are 136; in this town, 164; but in this branch, 329. The deaths under 50 years of age in the kingdom are 422; and among the pen-blade grinders, 640. . . . At this period, little beyond the prime of life, when there are in this branch only 60 individuals remaining out of 1000, in the kingdom there are left out of the same number, 578," p. 18.

† "I think," says Mr. Wilson, "we have no trades occupying lands now, a conclusive proof that the experiment failed. After the colliers' strike of 1844 (?) a people's colliery was established under the auspices of the trades' unions. My own trade, the penknife grinders, subscribed for six shares, and after they were paid up, I had them offered to me for nothing."

"2. An early application for a small advance, to be followed afterwards by others.

"3. A funeral gift of £2 in case of death.

"With regard to the scale of allowance, the cases will of necessity be extremely limited, as you will readily perceive not much can be allowed from a contribution so low as 3*d.*; still, a beginning will be made, as it is very desirable to be made known:—First, to the workman, that where advantages are sought by the master at his expense, he has a resource to fly to in case of necessity; and, secondly, to the master, that he cannot trample upon the rights of the workman with impunity. This brings us to a second proposition—an early application for a small advance.

"The committee deem it necessary that before any steps are taken in this direction, at least 500 names should be taken, ready and willing to support the committee in their measures, a nucleus would thus be formed by which the rest of the trade would be drawn together; when an intimation given for an advance would be received with the assurance that a request made from a united body cannot be trifled with, and would therefore be conceded at once. As past experience has shown that it is not by any great or sudden changes that you can be permanently benefited, it is intended to advance by gradual steps, and to insure the permanence of every advance as often as it is conceded. By these means, with a small outlay per week, the trade would be raised to a standard of respectability equal to the best in Sheffield.

"Of the third proposition, not many words need be said. Its utility will be acknowledged by all, and though not a large sum in itself, will help to mitigate the privations of those whom death has deprived of a parent or friend.

"Fellow-workmen,—The committee have indicated the path they intend to pursue, and, reserving the details, leave the matter for you to ponder over carefully; feeling confident that whether you support them or not, they have been actuated with the best wishes to promote the welfare and prosperity of the trade at large.

"Yours, on behalf of the committee,

"A. B., *President.*
"C. D., *Secretary.*"

The flourishing condition and high wages of the operatives engaged in the file trade, and the distress and privation which, when they do not actually afflict, seem always to impend over, the artisans engaged in the penknife manufacture, suggest consideration. The cause of the difference is not to be sought in the fact that the one branch has successfully maintained, and the other has failed to establish a strong and lasting union. If this were the root of the matter, no doubt the penknife cutlers would soon remedy their condition, by uniting. The power effectively to combine is not only a means, but a sign of strength. This power, as we have seen, the penknife cutlers have not. The goods which they manufacture being articles of every-

day and almost universal use, must be sold cheaply, in order to be accessible to a certain class of purchasers, and that the largest. The slender cost of tools and materials requisite for their manufacture renders this cheapness easily practicable. Little labour and less care, however, can be devoted to them. Hence there arises with inferior goods, a large class of inferior workmen, who, compared with those engaged in the higher branches of the same and other trades, may be described as almost unskilled. The facility with which these men can set up as small masters renders restriction in the number of apprentices and journeymen useless.

In the higher department of the trade, as I am informed, degrees of skill vary so much that it is absolutely impossible to establish any system of uniform prices. The master only can judge, after considerable observation, the minute shades of difference which render the work even of good workmen of very unequal value, and apportion his payments accordingly. Hence it follows that while the most skilled artisans in this trade can command an adequate price, and while persons that require good workmanship must, of necessity, pay well for it, the great bulk of the operatives, whose protection is specially and professedly the object of trade societies, are very differently situated. The instances which have been cited to me of voluntary advances in this and other trades, when not in union, all refer to particular houses, which do not manufacture any but valuable goods, and employ only skilful hands. They have, therefore, no general applicability.—So far as a union, such as that of the file trade, succeeds in securing a high rate of wages for its members, so far it achieves a useful end. It should be remembered, however, that the undue limitation of its members forces labour, which would otherwise be attracted to it, into other and already over-stocked departments, and thus perhaps creates among the working classes, taken as a whole, more distress than it prevents in its own ranks. This consideration, which does not raise the much controverted points in dispute between employers and workmen, but keeps the question strictly a working man's question, deserves, perhaps, to be more thoughtfully weighed by members of stringently limited trades than it has yet been. The miserable condition of the penknife cutlers, and the unparalleled prosperity of the filesmiths, are, to some extent, correlative. They are like the two arms of an unequally weighted balance; as the one rises the other sinks.

I now proceed to state such facts as I have been able to gather together respecting the present condition of trades' societies in Sheffield. The following list enumerates the trades which, in February, 1859, were, and those which were not in union, and gives the hours of meeting in some of the former.

TRADES IN UNION.

Amalgamated Engineers.—Monday, Feb. 28th, and fortnightly, 7 o'clock.
Bookbinders.—First Monday in the month, 8 o'clock.
Bone Scale Cutters.—Every Monday.
Brick Makers.—Monday, March 7th, and fortnightly.

Brush Makers.—Wednesday after second Monday in each month.
Bricklayers.—Every Monday.
Cabinet Makers.—Fourth Monday in the month, 8 o'clock.
Coach Builders.—First Monday in the month.
Colliers.—Barnsley District; Sheffield District.—Every Saturday, 8 o'clock.
Copperplate and Lithographic Printers.
Cordwainers.—Second Monday in each month.
Coopers.—Feb. 26th, and every alternate Saturday.
Cork Cutters.—Every Saturday.
Edge Tool Grinders.—Every Tuesday.
Edge Tool Forgers.—Every Monday.
Edge Tool Hardeners.—Monday, Feb. 28th, and fortnightly.
Fender Grinders.—Every Tuesday, at 7 o'clock.
Fender Makers.—Tuesday, March 1st, and fortnightly.
Filesmiths.
File Grinders.—Every Monday.
File Hardeners.—Every Saturday.
Fork Grinders.—Every Tuesday, 7 o'clock.
German Silver Spoon and Fork Filers.—Every Saturday, 8 o'clock.
Glass Grinders.—Every Saturday.
Hoop, Haft, and Scale Pressers.—Every Monday, 8 o'clock.
Ironmoulders.—Every Saturday.
Jobbing Saw Grinders.—Every Tuesday.
Joiners.—Local Lodge.—Every Monday, 8 o'clock; General Lodge.—Feb. 21st, and every alternate Monday, 8 o'clock.
Letter-press Printers.—General Meetings, the second Monday in January, April, July, and October, 8 o'clock.
Metal Smiths.—No. 2.—Every Wednesday, half-past 7.
Painters.—Every Saturday, 8 o'clock.
Patent Scythe Makers.—Saturday, March 5th, and fortnightly.
Railway Spring Makers.—Feb. 28th, and every alternate Monday, 8 o'clock.
Razor Blade Makers.—Every Tuesday, 8 o'clock.
Razor Grinders.
Razor Smiths.
Saw Makers.—Every Thursday, 8 o'clock.
Saw Grinders.—General Meetings, Tuesday, March 15th, and every eighth Tuesday, at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.
Saw Handle Makers.—Feb. 15th, 7 o'clock.
Scissor Grinders.—Every Monday, 7 o'clock.
Scythe Grinders.—Feb. 28th, and every alternate Monday, 5 o'clock.
Scythe Makers.—Saturday, March 5th, and fortnightly.
Sheep Shear Makers.—Every Saturday, 7 o'clock.
Sickle Makers and Grinders.
Silversmiths.—Every Monday, half-past 7 o'clock.
Steam Engine Makers.—Saturday, March 5th, and fortnightly, 8 o'clock.
Stone Masons.—Every Monday, half-past 7 o'clock.
Stove-Grate Fitters.
Table Blade Forgers.—Every Wednesday.
Table Blade Grinders.—Every Tuesday.
Table-Knife Hafters.—Every Tuesday.
Tailors.—Monday, Feb. 21st, and fortnightly.
Tobacco Cutters.—Saturday after the 25th of each month.
Typefounders.
White Metal Smiths.—Every Wednesday, half-past 7 o'clock.

TRADES NOT IN UNION.

Cabinet Case Makers.
Brass Casters.
Joiners' Tool Makers.
Opticians.
Pearl Grinders.
Pen and Pocket Blade Grinders.
Penknife Cutlers.
Silver Stampers.
Surgical Instrument Makers.

The following trades constitute the Association of Organized Trades of Sheffield and the neighbourhood; the figures prefixed denote the number of members in each trade society.

200 Britannia Metal Smiths.
50 British Plate, Spoon, and Fork Filers.
11 Copper-plate and Lithographic Printers.
14 Cork Cutters.
190 Edge Tool Grinders.
204 File Grinders.
84 Fork Grinders.
100 Joiners' Tool & Brace Bit Makers.
100 Letter-press Printers.
54 Patent Scythe Makers.
203 Railway Spring Makers.
100 Razor Smiths.
370 Saw Makers.
188 Saw Grinders.
136 Saw-handle Makers.
56 Scythe Grinders.
55 Scythe Makers.
200 Sickle Forgers.
70 Sickle Grinders.
100 Stone Masons.
126 Stove-Grate Fitters.
600 Table Knife Hafters.
600 Table Knife Grinders.
127 Tailors.
42 United Carpenters and Joiners.

The Association of Organized Trades of Sheffield had its origin in a dispute, in 1858, between a master printer and his journeymen, into the details of which, as the trade in question is not distinctively a Sheffield one, it is unnecessary to enter here at greater length than is done in the passage presently to be quoted from the report of this Association, which, after several preliminary meetings of trade delegates, was established in June, 1859. In September of that year seventeen societies, numbering together 3000 members, had affiliated themselves to it. In February, 1860, five other trades had joined, making the number of constituent societies twenty-two, and of members 3,536. Some of the rules and objects of the Association are mentioned in the following extracts from a report read at a public dinner of the Amalgamated Trades on Shrove Tuesday last:—

"It may not, perhaps, be here out of place to state that the entrance fee is one penny per member, and the contributions (according to rule) cannot exceed 3*d.* per year per member; and the executive is fully determined to use the strictest economy in conducting the affairs of the Association. The chief objects of the Association are:—The establishment and perpetuation of a more intimate connexion between all branches of the operative classes, and giving increased efficiency to the operations of trade societies. In case of a dispute in any trade, either in resistance of an encroachment, or in an effort to obtain an advance of wages, the executive are empowered to guarantee the co-operation of the Association to the extent of endorsing, printing, and issuing appeals to the trades and the public, and by such other assistance in the way of counsel and advice, or personal delegation, as may to the executive be deemed proper and advantageous. The special attention of the trades is directed to the fact that it is the duty of the executive before endorsing any strike, to consider whether a collision cannot be obviated, either by their own mediation, or by such arbitrative body as may be mutually agreed upon by the employer and the employed, then at variance. The executive con-

ceive this to be a very important element in the constitution of the Association, and one that must commend itself to the favourable consideration of all classes of the community. By this means strikes may not unfrequently be avoided, as bodies of men, strong in their conviction of right, are apt to place too much reliance in the power of that right to overcome all obstacles; whereas the counsel of impartial and experienced men of other trades might lead them to a more complete measurement of their position, and the difficulties to be encountered. It will be seen from the foregoing that the Association does not interfere with the internal management of any trade society; that it seeks no control over its funds; that it does not foster or encourage strikes, as is sometimes laid to the charge of similar bodies by those who know little and care less of the workings of executives; but that it does all in its power to prevent such lamentable collisions as are sometimes witnessed. But in the event of their exertions to prevent strikes proving unavailing, they are ever ready and willing to render their aid, in obtaining both the moral and pecuniary assistance of the trades for those who may be so unfortunate as to require either one or both. The executive can with confidence refer to several cases in which they have already been of essential service to trades which have been in difficulties. The one which called the Association into existence, 'The Printers' Dispute,' may be mentioned amongst others. Law proceedings for libel had been commenced against several parties before the establishment of the Association, and the actions involved the Printers' Society in liabilities for more than £1000. By personal delegation to the trades, and the proceeds of benefits, the executive were enabled to hand over £182 to the printers towards the liquidation of these expenses. They were also instrumental in causing the withdrawal of the action against the president and secretary of the Printers' Society, and have since used their influence to bring about a reconciliation between Mr. H—— and the printers. Hitherto, however, they regret to say, that these efforts have proved unavailing, although several interviews have taken place, with a view to a settlement of the grievances between these parties. A protracted struggle was brought to a satisfactory conclusion with the sickle and hook trade and their employers, chiefly through the moral influence that was brought to bear on the employers by the Association; for immediately the delegates passed a resolution pledging themselves to support the sickle trade (who up to this period had manfully maintained their ground), the employers made overtures for a settlement of the dispute. A collision with the hackle-pin grinders of Hathersage, too, was settled through the good offices of a deputation from the executive, which at one time threatened to end in law proceedings against the secretary of the hackle-pin grinders.* Counsel and advice of a

* Hackle-pin grinders of Hathersage.—This dispute, I am informed by the secretary of the Association, arose through some misunderstanding between the

serviceable nature have also been rendered to an important branch of the Sheffield trade—the railway spring makers; and the executive have pleasure in stating that, through their advice a collision was averted between the railway spring makers and their employers, and which ended in the men obtaining an advance in their prices. The executive opine that the foregoing cases will be sufficient to show the utility and importance of the Association; but there is one gigantic struggle, in which they have rendered their aid, to which they cannot, in justice either to the importance of the struggle or to themselves, refrain from referring, the more especially as they are this evening honoured with the presence of several who have borne no unimportant part in the contest. They allude, of course, to the builders' 'lock-out' in London. It is not in their province to enlarge on this memorable struggle—one in which the men of London have rendered themselves conspicuous not only for the peaceful and orderly manner in which they have conducted themselves amidst the most trying difficulties and unexampled privations, but also for their devotion to the great and glorious principles of union. All honour then, to these bright examples of 'nature's noblemen!' and may the operative classes never again hear of such an outrage on our common nature as the 'odious and obnoxious document' that was placed before the building trades of London, but which happily has now, through the exertions of the working community, been withdrawn; and the men can now return to their labour without being required to sign away their freedom."

In July, 1860, as I learn from its First Annual Report then published, the Association consisted of twenty-five trades, and 3,982 members. In this report the executive state that, after discussing among themselves at great length, in March, 1860, Mr. Mackinnon's Bill for the Establishment of Courts of Conciliation for the Adjustment of Differences between Masters and Operatives, and taking care to inform themselves of its provisions, they communicated their views to the members for the borough.

"The Bill," they say, "being only *permissive*, your executive were anxious that it should be altered so as to make it *compulsory* on all masters and workmen in any trade in which a *majority* of such trade might petition for its adoption, believing that to be effective in Sheffield it would be necessary that it should be equally binding on all, when once adopted. Your executive were also desirous that instead of *one court for each trade*, as provided by the Bill, there

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Union and the masters as to the employment of a man of irregular habits. A statement was issued by the men *before* the Trades' Delegates were consulted, which turned out to be unfounded to a certain extent. One of the newspaper proprietors was threatened with an action for inserting it as an advertisement. A deputation from the delegates went over to Hathersage (twelve miles from Sheffield), and after a lengthy interview with the employers, arranged the matter, and so saved further unpleasantness either to the newspaper proprietor or the men. The trade, ceasing to be united, has since quitted the Association. The dispute in the Sickle Trade, and that in the Railway Spring Trade, are afterwards spoken of.

should be *one general court for each town*, to be elected in a similar manner as the Town Council or the Highway Boards, believing that a Council of Conciliation thus elected would be much more advantageous to the town, inasmuch as its decisions would have greater weight, and, consequently, be more respected.

"These were the principal alterations suggested, but, unfortunately, they were too late to be laid before the Parliamentary Committee, and consequently it was not thought advisable to jeopardise the Bill in passing its third reading before the House of Commons, the executive being desirous of seeing some such bill in operation; therefore, acting on the advice of our indefatigable member, Mr. Hadfield, it was decided not to take further action in the matter.

"The Bill has passed the House of Commons, and was read a second time before the House of Lords on the 3rd of July, and referred to a select committee. There is every reason to believe that it will soon become law;* in which case your executive earnestly hope that it may realize all the good anticipated by its promoters, and so tend to create a better feeling between employers and employed. Believing the Bill to have this tendency, and being anxious to further, by every possible means, this feeling, your executive strongly urge on all trades—and more especially those comprised in the Association—the advisability of taking steps to form Courts of Conciliation in all cases where practicable, and thus show to their employers, and the public generally, that they are both anxious and willing to submit their differences to a properly constituted and impartial tribunal."

The executive state further, that they have been in communication with an association similar to their own, which has been established at Newcastle and Gateshead, and with one in the course of formation at Maidstone.

Since February (the date of the Report is July) six trades had joined themselves to the Association, viz., the Tailors' Protection Society, the Stove-Grate Fitters of Sheffield and Rotherham, the Joiners' Tool and Brace-Bit Makers, and the British Plate Spoon and Fork Filers.

The total receipts of the Association are stated at £32 0*s.* 10½*d.*, the expenditure at £39 1*s.* 8½*d.*, leaving a balance due to the treasurer of £7 0*s.* 10*d.* The expenses of the public dinner, in February, seem to have been the cause of this deficit. The details of income and expenditure are recorded in the following statement:—

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* "NOTE.—Since the Report was adopted by the Delegates, the House of Lords have decided, unfortunately, not to proceed further with the Bill this Session."

Dr. RECEIPTS.	£	s.	d
TRADES' CONTRIBUTIONS:—			
Sickle Grinders	0	11	8
Sickle Forgers	1	8	4
Railway Spring Makers	1	10	9
Saw Makers	2	18	4
Saw-Handle Makers	1	2	4
Patent Scythe Makers	0	8	9
Hackle-Pin Grinders	0	3	2
Copper-plate Printers	0	2	0
Letter-press Printers	3	16	10
Saw Grinders	1	10	10
Table Blade Grinders	5	0	0
Scythe Grinders	0	9	5
File Grinders	1	14	0
United Carpenters and Joiners	0	7	10
Table-Knife Hafters	5	0	0
Razor Smiths	0	16	8
Britannia Metal Smiths	1	18	4
Fork Grinders	0	14	0
Edge Tool and Wool Shear Grinders	1	11	8
Common Scythe Forgers	0	8	11
Stone Masons	0	1	4
Cork Cutters	0	2	2
Stove-Grate Fitters	0	10	6
Joiners' Tool and Brace Bit Makers	0	8	4
Tailors' Protection Society	0	10	9
British Plate Filers	0	4	2
Cash for Reports of Public Dinner	1	3	0½
	£32	0	10½
Balance due to the Treasurer	7	0	10
	£39	1	8½

Cr. EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
DEPUTATIONS:—						
Messrs. Bagshaw, Austin, & Broadhead, various deputations to Mr. Harrison, on behalf of Printers	1	16	0			
Messrs. Bagshaw & Broadhead, deputation to Railway Spring Makers	0	12	0			
Deputation Expenses	0	0	9	2	8	9
Mr. Broadhead, Balance of Dinner Expenses				10	10	1½
Expenses incurred in Testimonial to Mr. Broadhead.				1	14	0
STATIONERY, PRINTING, &c.:—						
Messrs. Loxley Brothers, Books and Printing	2	14	3			
Printing 5000 copies of Rules, &c	5	19	0			
Printing for dinner	3	5	0			
Mr. Hinchliffe, Printing 3000 Hand Bills	1	1	0			
Mr. Ingram, Distributing do.	0	6	0			
Mr. Leader, Printing Reports of Dinner	2	5	0			
Stationery, Postage Stamps, &c.	1	0	1	16	10	4
Secretary's Salary				8	0	0
Executive expenses (23 Meetings)				4	18	6
				£39	1	8½

July 10th, 1860—Examined and found correct,

E. F., G. H. } *Auditors.*

I append such information about the Unions of particular trades as seems worth recording :—

The principal branches of the Table-Knife trade are these—forging, grinding, and hafting. The following remarks refer principally to the table-knife hafters,—including the other branches only so far as they are connected with the former.

To remedy or lessen the evils under which, from 1837 to 1842, the operative table hafters laboured, the men, with the sanction, and even at the suggestion of the masters, formed a union. A list of prices was agreed on, with the understanding, that it should be revised when trade mended. In 1844, a new list was presented by the men, to which, after some demur, the masters, who were still in union with the artisans, assented. From this time until the year 1847, the trade flourished, and the union was strong; there were no strikes, and in spite of some disputes on minor matters, in which the men invariably triumphed, the feeling between them and their employers, was good. The following details, respecting the organization of the trade then subsisting, are based on information given by one who, at that time, took an active part in the management of its affairs. The town was divided into twelve districts; each district had its own committee, and committee-rooms, at some public-house. The central committee consisted of twelve delegates, one from each district. It hired a house, where it held its sittings; and thither any master who required workmen made application for them. Two paid officers were in permanent session, at the quarters of the central committee, and practically wielded its affairs. The whole trade, consisting of about 1,200 men, could be brought together within an hour. Matters of controversy between the men and their employers, referred principally to the payments claimed or offered for work which the list of prices did not sufficiently define. Instead of directing the workmen to refuse the wages alleged to be inadequate, paying them out of the funds of the Union, and placing all the men in the establishment, in which the disagreement had arisen, upon strike, as the former practice had been, another course was now adopted. The man was instructed to receive the wages offered, the amount in dispute was paid by the Union, and debited on account to the master. The account ran on often for months—in a case which was mentioned for eighteen months—and sometimes reached £8 or £9. The Union bided its time, and when the master had a good order, required additional men, or for some other reason became dependent on the society, they refused to accede to his requests, until he had paid his outstanding "bill" to them. During this period, no "outlaw" could obtain work, except by becoming a "little master." Only the sons of table hafters could be taken as apprentices to the trade. The real rules of the Union were not printed; nor were any periodical reports published.

The price list of 1844 remained in force till the close of 1847. Trade then declined. The funds of the Union were so heavily drawn upon, that after paying some thousands of pounds to unemployed members, it ceased to exist. The state of things which led to a dissolution of the Society, naturally brought with them a reduction of wages. An unsuccessful attempt to gain an advance was made in 1850. In 1856, a meeting took place between the working table-knife hafters and the master manufacturers, and a new list was agreed upon, "the employers admitting," says a workman,

in a letter in the *Sheffield Independent*, September 24th, 1859, "that this list was not sufficiently remunerative, and that when circumstances were more favourable, the manufacturers would consider an improvement. That time," the writer thinks, "has now come. No body of men have suffered more, or even as much as the Table-Knife Hafters. It is a well-known fact that our condition has been, and is, a deplorable one. What time can we have for mental culture when it requires us to work from twelve to sixteen hours to obtain a living, and if we rate our wages at the highest possible scale, say from 10*s.* to 20*s.* per week, it should be remembered that we have all working materials to find out of this, besides shop rent, which will take from 2*s.* to 4*s.* per week." Considering the depression of trade, the table-knife manufacturers advised the hafters to forego any attempt at an advance of prices. In consequence a letter appeared in the *Sheffield Independent* from the committee of the table-knife hafters, stating that while they remembered with gratitude many valuable services rendered them by their employers, yet, that the late proceedings on their part were not calculated to "maintain confidence in them." The committee concluded: "We therefore feel it to be our duty to advise our workmen to look to themselves and their own resources, so as to be enabled to take advantage of any opportunity, when it presents itself, of securing what our employers have acknowledged we need, and what they had given us reason to expect we should have received at the end of this month, but of which we have been disappointed."

A rejoinder, purporting to be from "A Table-Knife Hafter," appeared in the *Independent* of November 26. The writer states, "that about a year ago the masters and workmen met together to make arrangements as to what prices should be given for hafting, which was miserably bad at that time, and what should be the principles on which both parties should act for the future.

"What is called the regulated price, was offered by the masters, and also thankfully accepted by the workmen. It was also distinctly understood that mutual interest should be the basis of their proceedings hereafter, and that no advance should take place without the consent of both parties, with a view of putting an end to strikes." The writer complains that this understanding has been departed from by the workmen, their committee having advised an entire dissolution of the Union with the masters, at the Hall of Science, where a resolution was carried to that effect.

The two following letters, with which I have been favoured, give both the result, and the masters' and workmen's view, of the controversy. The first is from a large Sheffield manufacturer.

"Sheffield, *July 30th*, 1860.

"Dear Sir,—You are probably aware that for some years there has been co-operation between the workmen and a number of the largest manufacturers, to agree together and maintain, if possible, one uniform rate of wages, and to prevent a downfall of prices when

trade is slack, and to prevent excessive high prices when trade is good. As a whole there has been much good done by this; but now and then either hafters, or forgers, or grinders will be independent of the masters, when they think the power is with them, and there is a good demand for labour. In September or October last year the grinders of table blades set the masters at defiance, and against all our remonstrances, would have an advance of 10 per cent., as trade was good. The masters submitted. Previous to this there had been an understanding, although no actual agreement, that when the table-knife trade could stand an advance, the hafters were to have it, as being the worst paid branch. The grinders forestalled this by force, and got the advance. The masters and hafters met two or three times after this, and as trade gradually then got worse they were advised by the masters to postpone their threatened advance. This was not at all liked by many, but the masters would give no advance then; and hence the letter you refer to in the *Independent* of November 6, 1859. Trade has since then been very dull, and the grinders would have been much better off had they never obtained the last advance of 10 per cent., as many of them have never had full employment since. Excuse this hurried explanation.

"I am, yours truly,

"K. L."

To this, the following reply has been made on behalf of the table-knife grinders:—

"Sheffield, *August* 21*st*, 1860.

"Dear Sir,—In reply to yours, I beg to state that your informant is correct, in stating that 'for some years there has been co-operation between masters and workmen,' &c., but notwithstanding this agreement one of the largest employers, at the end of about twelve months, broke through the agreement.

"The facts are these—In 1857 we entered into an agreement with the principal employers to abide by the list of prices then paid for twelve months, we undertaking not to ask for any *advance* for that period, let trade be good or bad, and the employers agreeing not to reduce these prices *under any circumstances*, even after the expiration of the twelve months; but notwithstanding this agreement, one of the employers who had been a party to the agreement, and a member of the masters' committee, at the end of twelve months sent us word that unless we would submit to a *reduction* of 25 per cent. he should turn all his men out (about 30). In consequence of this unexpected, and, as we think, unaccountable step we were compelled to close the box (that is, to cease paying the men who had been thus sacrificed). From this time prices gradually went down, the firm named actually compelling the men to submit to a reduction of at least 40 per cent., never giving any work out at the rate of 25 per cent. reduction; but the box being closed, the men were obliged to submit to a still further reduction, which amounted to from 40 to 50 per cent. off the price agreed upon.

"Prices generally came down throughout the town in consequence to fully 50 per cent., which state of things continued till October, 1858, when trade being good we sought to have a portion of this discount reduced; but still the employer refused, and we were compelled to strike, and we thus succeeded in our object, and got up to a 20 per cent. off the *original* statement, which we asked for, but the employers refused to give.

"From this time till October, 1859, we were paid at this 20 per cent. off the old list, when we asked them to come to the original statement, and to take off this 20 per cent., which they refused to do; but not wishing to act arbitrarily towards the employers we gave them a month's notice that we should require to be paid at the original statement (with some slight alterations, which their secretary acknowledged reasonable). We had several interviews with them, and the result was that we agreed to their proposition to take 10 per cent. off the foreign trade, and to have full list price for the country trade; but notwithstanding this agreement they did not give out any work, and the result was that we paid to our unemployed the first week more than £170. The employers seeing we were united, and prepared to stand out, after two or three weeks gave way, and agreed to the terms proposed.

"Thus you will see the masters took every advantage of our position, but we did not obtain, and we have never asked for any advance on the statement of 1853; and therefore you will also see that the statement of your informant, that we took advantage of the hafters, is untrue, as we have only obtained the old list price, which we should not have been able to do had we not been better united than they were.

"In conclusion, I may state that the names of the employers in question are withheld, but they can be given if the statements are doubted; and I shall be glad to furnish any further information or explanation in my power.

"I am, dear Sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"M. N."

The *Railway Spring Makers* of Sheffield are in union, and in connexion with the Association of Organized Trades. The secretary, who has very courteously and satisfactorily answered the inquiries of the Committee, states that their society includes all railway spring makers in Sheffield, four men only excepted, whom the Union will not receive, though it allows them to work without interference. The society was established September 27th, 1857. Two societies previously founded, "got broken up" through mismanagement; "men threw off the yoke of government—all wanted to be masters; leading characters were treated contemptuously, and, therefore, no respectable, intelligent man would take any active part in the affairs of the Union."

The earnings of workmen in the trade are said to range between 20*s.* and 45*s.* a week (full time), according to the branches in which

they are employed, and the varying skill of the artisan. A "viceman" will earn from 20*s.* to 35*s.* weekly; a filer from 20*s.* to 45*s.*

Extracts from the rules of this society are given in the Report on Trades' Societies' Rules.

The average hours of work in the trade, which is said to be very laborious, are nine hours a day. Equality of wages is not insisted on. If one man has greater abilities than another (the Union knows the abilities of every man in the trade), and his employer pays him according to his abilities and the amount of work he is competent to do, the Union is satisfied; but working *below* a certain *minimum* appears to be prohibited. There is no benefit club in connexion with the society, which has members in some other places than Sheffield, principally at railway stations. With very few exceptions, workmen are paid by the piece. The society has one officer, who devotes himself entirely to the management of its affairs, at a salary of £1 a week.

During the last ten years, three strikes have occurred in the trade, all of them, according to the secretary's statement, to resist the encroachments of employers. The first took place in 1851, and lasted seventeen weeks. In a handbill, dated Feb. 18th, 1851, and headed "The Appeal of the Railway Spring Makers to the Inhabitants of Sheffield, and the Public generally," the grounds of the strike are thus, in substance, stated:—

In 1846, the price of railway spring and vicing was reduced from 5*s.* to 3*s.* 6*d.* per hundredweight. In 1851, two employers attempted a further reduction, which, according to the estimate of the men, would take about 30 or 40 per cent. from the wages they were then receiving. A strike against these employers took place. They are charged in the handbill with having recourse to "every dodge, no matter how mean and artful, to procure the downfall of the artisan, even to the employing of workmen at the very price for which the Sheffield spring makers were contending." The trade was disorganized, having few members and small funds, and was obliged to appeal to other societies for aid. Most of the masters were willing to give the men the prices which they strove to uphold. I am not informed of the result. Of the second of the three strikes referred to, I have no information. The third occurred in January of the present year. It is thus related:—

On the 14th of March, 1859, a meeting of railway spring makers was held, at which an advance was resolved on, and a circular to this effect was printed and sent to each of the manufacturers. It contained the details of a new scale of prices to take effect on and after the first day of July. A deputation of workmen visited the employers, who promised that if the men would wait a little, the masters would give an advance, as soon as trade improved. The workmen, on this undertaking consented to waive the matter for a time. It remained in abeyance until November following. In that month, at a public dinner to one of the largest firms in the town, the head of the firm (as reported in the *Sheffield Telegraph*, November 7th) "took occasion to refer to an application that had been made a short

time ago by the men employed in the spring department for an advance of wages. At that time the business in that department was not in so flourishing a condition as to enable them to comply with the request, but he was glad to say that it had since improved. The request for an advance of wages had been made in a manly and proper manner. No undue influence was attempted to be exercised, moral influence alone being employed, and they would find that that was by far the most sensible and successful course to adopt. He was glad to be able to say that they had come to the unanimous conclusion, that if the business continued to be as brisk as it was at the present time, the advance that was asked for would be granted on the 1st of January next." According to the statement of the men, trade continued to be good, but when the 1st of January came, the masters (with only one exception) refused the promised advance on the ground that they had not had sufficient notice; and asked the men to wait yet longer. The men, imagining that they were being played with, refused to do so, and turned out. On the second day, however, after the withdrawal, a conference was held between both parties to the dispute. The men agreed to accept half of what they had demanded, and the matter was settled. The present relations between employers and employed are described as being perfectly cordial and friendly.

The *Scissors Trade* is in union, but is not in connexion with the Association of Organized Trades.

Answers to the questions of the Committee have been received from a scissors manufacturer, employing thirty-eight men and apprentices, and thirty women. He states the wages paid by him as follows (they are paid by piecework):—Forgers earn from 18*s.* to 30*s.* per week; filers 20*s.* to 35*s.*; finishers 22*s.* to 40*s.*; grinders 24*s.* to 40*s.* The above are men's wages. Women as dressers earn from 7*s.* to 11*s.* per week. All are paid by the piece or dozen. The average wages given to scissor makers, in the town, are said to be 10 per cent. less than those in the above list; often, owing to the men having only partial employment, as much as 25 per cent. less.

For fourteen or fifteen years the union in the scissors trade has been feeble, and virtually non-existent. The trade has been as prosperous without a union as it was when it had one. The employer to whom I owe this information has employed only non-unionist workmen since 1844. The difference which led him to this step is briefly stated by him in the following terms:—

"The Union not only regulated the price of labour, but insisted that in case of a strike, on resuming work, every man must have his old place and quality of work. We offered, in 1844, our men an advance of 5 per cent., on condition that they ceased to belong to the Union, thus gaining at least 10 per cent. to the men, in not paying to the general fund. They refused, and after five weeks' notice we closed our manufactory until we could resume work with non-unionist men. We remained closed for eight or nine weeks, when we were able to work partially, but were not quite complete in

numbers under twelve weeks. As the men had no connexion with the Union it cost from £60 to £80 in employing watchmen to protect our men's tools from damage at night time. Unless this had been done no workman would have remained faithful to us from fear for their tools, some workmen having tools from £10 to £25 in value." The employer considers non-unionist workmen to be quite equal in character and skill to society-men. During the brisk trade anterior to 1854, he had to raise wages 20 per cent. It is evident from the higher rate of wages paid by this gentleman, that the workmen in his establishment are of a better class than the average of those in the same branch. The workmen, therefore, probably, being able to rely upon their superior skill, do not need the aid which unions profess to afford to the ordinary and unskilled artisan.

A joint set of answers to the questions of the Committee has been forwarded from the *Sickle Forgers' and Grinders' Societies* of Sheffield. These societies are in connexion with the Association of Organized Trades. By the custom of the trades, the hours of labour are limited to twelve a day. Workmen are obliged to work at the list prices. Nothing is done to prevent non-unionists from working with unionists, "on their (the non-unionists) becoming united with society men." Seven years is the usual term of apprenticeship, "subject to a discount of a penny in the shilling, up to the age of nineteen." On one occasion, and only on one, employers voluntarily gave an advance. There is a Sick and Funeral Fund in connexion with the Society.

During the last ten years there has been only one strike in this trade. It took place in 1858, and is stated to have been for the recovery of an agreement made with the masters in 1848. The men claimed ten per cent. advance, but would have accepted five per cent. The masters refused this compromise, and the strike went on. After a struggle of five months, it ended in favour of the men. The aid of the Association of Organized Trades, or rather of the Trades' Delegates, the Association being then only in process of formation, was afforded in the contest, and helped to bring it to a close. On application of the men, who had at that time been out eighteen weeks, "a resolution," the secretary of the Association writes, "was passed, pledging the delegates to represent their case to their respective trades, as one deserving their pecuniary support; the sickle and hook trade having been always well united among themselves, and having subscribed liberally to other trades in distress." Interviews with both the employers and the men were held, and the advance was ultimately granted. "The resolution passed by the delegates," says the secretary, "was published, and this appeared to hasten the settlement,—the employers seeing that the men would obtain support from the Sheffield trades generally."

In the answers which they have obligingly forwarded to the questions of the Committee, the *File Grinders* state that they number 283 members, and are, as they believe, the only society of file grinders in England. An apprentice is required to serve seven years: he

must be under fourteen years of age when he is bound; and cannot be admitted into the Society until he is twenty-one years of age; and then only on condition of his parent or master having paid subscription for him during his apprenticeship. No journeyman is allowed to have more than one apprentice; or to take an apprentice till he is twenty-five years of age; but when trade is good, and all hands are employed, the rule is sometimes deviated from. No limit is set to the hours during which a file grinder may work, or to the amount he may earn, though the same price is invariably required for work of the same kind. A good hand and steady man will sometimes get £2 a week where an inferior hand will only earn £1. The Society knew of no instance of a general advance of wages in the trade without intervention on its part; and is convinced that a fair rate of payment could not be obtained apart from the Union. This is shown in the case of persons who have forfeited the support of the Society, by not paying their contributions, and who are working, in some instances, at 10, 15, and 20 per cent. discount off the list of prices. "They are compelled to do it or starve, for they cannot get any support from the parish, if any one will find them employment at any price." If a non-unionist obtain work where members of the Union are working, the Society uses all the influence it has to induce him to join.

The committee sits every Monday evening at six o'clock, and the secretary calls over the name of each member, the amount paid by each member, and the amount paid to the unemployed during the week. Two members are appointed to audit the accounts of the Society every three months. The Secretary devotes all his time to the management of the Union, for which he receives 30*s.* a week. There is a "Free Gift" Fund in connexion with the Society from which allowances are made of 4*s.* weekly to members during sickness, £5 for the funeral expenses of members, and £3 for the funerals of their wives, and of the widows of late members.

Each member subscribes 3*d.* to the sick fund, and 6*d.* to the funeral fund; and after paying all demands and leaving a sum in stock to meet future claims, the residue is divided among the members at Christmas.

No allowance is made to a member on tramp, but if he hear of a situation elsewhere, money is given to take him to the place where the vacancy exists. Members leaving the town do not cease to be members, if they continue to pay their subscriptions.

The Society thinks that if trade societies could be made legal, and their rules could be enforced upon members by law, it would be a great improvement.

Answers have been received from one or two other trades, but they do not communicate information characteristically different from that which precedes. It has been, therefore, thought undesirable to occupy space by giving account of them.

It is impossible to conclude this paper without saying a few words on the subject of those trade outrages for which Sheffield has

become unhappily notorious. Some instances of them have been given already. The most common and most harmless (though still reprehensible) form which they take, is known in Sheffield as "rattening." Rattening consists in disabling the machinery of the obnoxious workman, either by breaking his tools, or cutting the bands which connect the trough at which he works with the steam or water power. More frequently the tools or bands are taken away and hidden, and restored uninjured when the workman has made reparation for the offence which has brought this punishment upon him. Neglect to pay to the funds of the Union is the common provocative of rattening. A man is at first warned, perhaps in a friendly way, that he had better pay up his arrears, or, as it is called, his "Natty money." If the warning fails of its effect, it gradually assumes something of a threatening character. At length he finds an unsigned scrawl upon his trough, to the effect that, if he still refrains from paying, "Natty shall be sent to make him." Unless he takes this hint, he is likely before very long to discover, on coming to work, his bands cut and his tools gone.

In other cases the destruction of property and even of life by incendiarism and explosion of gunpowder is resorted to. The following may serve as a specimen of these outrages. I confine myself to recent instances, the number of which might be indefinitely increased.

"On the 24th May, 1854," says a recent writer in the *Independent*, under the signature of "A Sheffielder," "a canister of powder was put down the chimney of Samuel Baxter, of Loxley, saw grinder. June the 5th, the same year, Elijah Parker, of Dore, was shot. He worked for Messrs. Newbould, and did not join the Union. About eight months previously, some vile miscreant hamstrung his horse, and otherwise annoyed him: but Parker now belongs to the trade, no doubt being induced thereto by arguments which I before said were 'not of very persuasive character.' The following note was received by a neighbour of Parker's:—

"'Sheffield, May 25th, 1854.—Samuel Lawe Be aweire of Wat Boune to occur, if you don't get shut of Bishop and the other lads very soon, the trade will send you some ling, look aft your cart, and horse, and shop. Elijah and you are qualified to ruin all trads in Shefl.—To Mr. Samuel Lawe, saw handle maker, Dore.'

"On June 5th, 1854, a bottle of gunpowder was put under one of the boilers at Messrs. T. Firth and Sons, and the following post brought to Mr. Mark Frith this polite epistle:—

"'June 6th, 1854.—Mr. Mark Firth i have to inform you that unless you get shut of those knobstick grinders from your weel that we shall be oblige to try some Remedy of our own, For we nowe the way into the weel and likewise to the Boiler and allso the warehouse and allso yourn own Residence, and if you think anything about yourself or your property you will imedetely turn them away, or you must expect what will follow.—We Remain your Well Wisher.'

"Samuel Baxter, before named, was one of the knobsticks working at Messrs. Firth's."

"ANOTHER TRADE OUTRAGE AT SHEFFIELD.—Yesterday morning another trade outrage was committed at Sheffield, against a man named John Trickett, a small table-knife manufacturer, who works on the premises of Mr. Shortcliffe, Central Works, Bailey Lane. It appears that early in the morning some persons broke into the room in which Trickett works, and, having obtained all the 'glazers,' bands, &c., on which they could lay their hands, piled them on a heap of forks which were laid on the floor, and then set fire to them. Trickett some time ago summoned a fork grinder in his employ for leaving work without notice; and it seems probable that this may be the cause of the outrage."—*Guardian*, Sept. 10th, 1859.

"ANOTHER OUTRAGE AT THE TOWER GRINDING WHEEL, SHEFFIELD.—On Tuesday morning a serious outrage was committed at the Tower grinding wheel. It appears that there are a number of men employed at the Tower wheel who are not members of the trades' union. On Monday thirty or forty members of the Union walked about the place, but nothing wrong occurred till Tuesday morning. A saw grinder, named Joseph Helewell, who works for Mr. Wilson, saw manufacturer, went to his work at the wheel about seven o'clock, and worked on his grinding stone till nine o'clock. At that time he went to work at his glazing trough, and when he had been at work there about two minutes an explosion of gunpowder took place, which caused some serious mischief. The gunpowder had been placed in the trough, and the sparks from the glazer having ignited it caused the explosion. Helewell was seriously injured about the eyes, nose, and arms, and his trousers were set on fire by the explosion. We understand that Helewell has only worked in that room for about a week, and that on going there he went to the secretary of the Union and offered to join, but was told that he would not be allowed to do so without certain other persons indicated also joined. The outrage is supposed to have been committed by some person connected with the Union, but as yet the perpetrator is at large."—*Sheffield Telegraph*, Oct. 20th, 1859.

"ANOTHER TRADE OUTRAGE AT SHEFFIELD.—ATTEMPT TO BLOW UP A HOUSE.—About six o'clock yesterday morning, Mr. Joseph Wilson, saw manufacturer, who occupies a house adjoining his works, at the corner of Milton and Headford Streets, Sheffield, was aroused by the noise of a violent explosion, which shook the house. Mr. Wilson instantly proceeded down-stairs, but found such an accumulation of rubbish and smoke in the passage that he was unable at first to get into the 'living' room. After some little delay he succeeded in getting into the room, when he found the floor blown up. In the cellar he found that a tin vessel, which had evidently contained combustibles, had been let in under the living room, and there exploded. A serious amount of damage has been done by the explosion. In the cellar there is little mischief done beyond the tearing off of a large quantity of plaster, &c. The explosive current passed in great

violence up the cellar-stairs, blowing down the shelves of crockery, &c., at the cellar head, and tearing down the partition, partly of wood and partly of brick—which separated the passage leading from the kitchen to the cellar from the front passage between the rooms. The hearthstone and boarded floor of the "living" room, which is over that part of the cellar, where the explosion occurred, were torn up almost the entire breadth of the room. The marble mantel-piece was broken in twain, and all the ornaments standing upon it were smashed to atoms. Singularly enough, the chimney glass was not in the least injured. A square table, left standing in the centre of the room, had evidently been tossed up against the chandelier, one of the glasses of which it had broken, and, falling heavily upon the floor, was broken into several pieces. In the sitting-room, damage of a similar character was done. The furniture in both rooms was in the utmost disorder, having evidently been tossed about in all directions, and everything was literally coated with dust, but the damage to the furniture is not extensive. The fan-light over the front door was completely blown out. In the bedroom, which is immediately over the "living" room, and was occupied by two children, no damage was done except to the plaster and moulding. Mr. and Mrs. Wilson slept over the sitting-room, the door of their bedroom being fastened with a chain bolt. This bolt was snapped off the staple by the violence of the explosive current against the door, and was thrown across the room on a table. The outer walls of the house nearest to which the explosion occurred are, however, damaged to a serious extent. In addition to several minor dislocations, a crevice from one to two inches in breadth has been made in the gable wall of the "living" room, apparently extending from the ground almost to the roof.

"Happily, the whole of the inmates, six in number, have escaped without the slightest injury.

"In explanation of the motive of this abominable outrage, the following circumstances are stated:—Mr. Wilson has for a period of fourteen years steadily refused to employ union men. For two or three years Mr. Wilson has had in his employ two saw grinders, who had been apprentices with James Linley, whose life had been several times attempted, and who was shot in the head some months ago. Mr. Wilson states that one of the men, while in his employ, endeavoured to persuade him to employ union men, remarking, 'If you don't, they will happen be shooting you.' Mr. Wilson replied that he was not afraid of that; for though he employed non-union men, he did not employ a large number of apprentices, like another man, whose name he mentioned. The reply was, 'He will be popped off this winter you'll see.' On losing three men, who joined the Union, Mr. Wilson set on a grinder, named Helliwell, who, it will be recollected, was seriously injured by an explosion of gunpowder, placed under his glazing stone, at the Tower Wheel, about seventeen days ago. About the time he set on Helliwell, a little more than three weeks ago, Mr. Wilson received a post letter, of which the following is a copy:—

'TO MR. JOSEPH WILSON.

'Dear Sir,—I take this opertunity of Just remining you that you are triyeing on a Dangerious game you are taking the place of another person Whose name it do not neede to mention by running a Bout to Decoy Boys to grind for you—it will save your Life if you do not succeed as it would cause you to Become the next game and In that case it is 50 to 1 upon your days beieng numbered you may treet this Litley and toss it into the fire if you will But so sure are you a doomed man and Bear in mind I have eithertoo allways don all that I have promiest in this way to the fullist measure.

'Signed TANTIA TOPE.'

"The man referred to in this letter is supposed to be Linley, who joined the Union during the last month, and is now 'on the box,' *i.e.*, in receipt of pay from the Union funds. The outrage upon Helliwell was committed about a week after the receipt of this letter by Mr. Wilson, and now the threat has been carried out in regard to Mr. Wilson himself.

"The perpetrators of the outrage appear to have escaped observation."—*Manchester Guardian*, Nov. 5.

"About half-past four o'clock yesterday morning, the inhabitants of Eckington were awoke by a tremendous explosion, shaking the whole of the village. Upon inquiring the cause, it was found that the warehouse of Mr. Mark Keeton, scythe, sickle, and hook manufacturer, had been destroyed by gunpowder; the whole of the place being a ruin. The only reason, if a reason it can be called, for the outrage is, that since the strike Mr. Keeton's men have not worked; he having promised them that he would inform them after his Irish journey (in which he is now engaged) whether he could give an advance or not; but it seems that they had not waited his return."

In January of the present year, an attempt was made to blow up the works of Messrs. Wheatman and Smith, saw manufacturers, who had introduced new machinery for grinding straight saws, which had hitherto been ground by hand. Rewards were offered for the detection of the offender, both by the injured manufacturers and the Government, but it was found expedient to withdraw the rewards. On the 30th of January, the following note was received by the mayor, from Messrs. Wheatman and Smith's solicitor:—

"Messrs. Wheatman and Smith have been so much alarmed by threatening letters sent to their wives, that they have determined not to proceed any futher in the matter. They have consulted with the secretary of the Saw Grinders' Union, and have determined to abandon their improved machinery. I regret this, as it will be a complete victory and encouragement to the lawless; but their determination seems to be inflexible. The safety of their families from personal violence is the consideration which alone has weighed with them. This is an awful state of things, and I really think Government should know of it.

After the receipt of this letter, the matter was prosecuted no further.

The degree in which some of the trades' societies of Sheffield are involved in, or responsible for, these outrages, cannot be precisely ascertained. They are too numerous, and directed too systematically against men whose only offences are offences against Union regulations, to allow us to suppose that societies do not, in many cases, either instigate or connive at them. The mere fact that it is impossible, in the great majority of instances, to trace the authors of such crime, shows that they are efficiently protected and screened. The presumption against the Unions has never been rebutted. At the same time, no doubt, many members and leaders of trades' societies thoroughly disapprove of these acts, which are the deeds of a criminal minority only.

The mode in which ruffians are hired for their work, was described to me, on good authority, to be the following. Nothing is said directly to them, but sufficiently intelligible hints are dropped, and a sum of money is placed in a drawer at one of the lodge-houses of the society. If the money is considered insufficient, it is put back again, and the amount is increased until it meets the demands of the person undertaking the business of which it is to be the payment. The outrages in one trade were said generally to be committed by men who are not members of that trade; sometimes by those who do not work at any calling, but have made rattening and trade outrages almost a profession.

In other cases, the method of deciding who shall ratten a man or blow up a factory, is by lot. Only he who draws the lot (and in some cases the President) knows on whom it has fallen. An inscription on the paper informs the holder of it where he will find the money to be given him when the task is done. Thus all the members of the trade can swear to their total ignorance of the perpetrator of an outrage, who has been selected in the way described.

I think it right to append, without abbreviation, the following paper, which probably expresses the views of the majority of intelligent and respectable employers of labour in Sheffield.

"At a meeting of the Sub-Committee of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce and Manufactures, held July, 1860, for the purpose of considering certain questions submitted by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, relating to Trades' Unions, it was resolved that the following general answers be sent to the secretary of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science:—

"1st. The workmen in the Sheffield trades are generally paid by the piece.

"2nd. Unions exist in almost all the Sheffield trades, for the purpose (among others) chiefly of adjusting or controlling the rate of wages, and limiting the number of workmen and apprentices.

"3rd. As a general thing, the majority of the men in any trade which has a union, belongs to the union, and pays to its funds, but only a small minority originates and maintains strikes.

"4th. The majority of the men who belong and pay to unions, do

so partly because they look upon the Union as a power which in case of need can materially assist in preventing any sudden or excessive fall in wages, partly under compulsion exercised by threats and intimidation, and to avoid annoyance from their fellow-workmen, and partly for the sake of assistance in money, which the Union affords to men out of employment.

"5th. The men who manage the unions are, perhaps, on the whole, taken from the most intelligent class in their particular trade, but it is not a rule that they can be classed also among the most skilled, industrious, or high wage earning of their fellow-workmen. They are generally only medium or indifferent workmen, but men with some education and natural aptitude for organising and carrying out the combined efforts of others.

"6th. As a rule, the men who do not belong to the unions are the least skilful and industrious of their class; there are many exceptions. Steady, industrious, quiet men, who wish to earn an honest living, day after day, without interference, belong to their unions for the sake of peace and quietness.

"7th. There can be no doubt, that great and sometimes insurmountable difficulty exists in introducing machinery or new processes into any trade where a union exists.

"8th. It is unusual for any personal difficulty to be thrown in the way, either of any particular man working for any particular master, or the reverse, by the Union. It is sometimes done, but usually, their measures apply generally.

"9th. It is possible and usual in some trades to arrange with very superior workmen about remuneration without regard to trade lists, and the Union either knows nothing about it, or does not interfere.*

"10th. There can be no doubt that the practice of organising, public speaking, and action does educate in the men who practise it a taste for, and power to, take part in public business generally.

"11th. The employers of labour in Sheffield have no combinations among themselves now, nor have they had any for very many years. Such combinations occasionally occur when an attempt is made to disturb existing prices and arrangements.

"12th. The apprenticeship system is usual in all the Sheffield trades which have unions, and in all such cases the employer is much interfered with, as to the number he can employ and the work which they may do.

"13th. In the opinion of this Chamber the existence of trades' unions among the Sheffield trades has tended to stereotype those trades, and throw great difficulties in the way of any enterprising manufacturer who, either by the introduction of machinery, new processes, varieties of patterns, re-adjustment of prices, &c., wished to make head against intelligent foreign competition; they have succeeded, just in proportion as the union of any trade was powerful,

* I am informed that inferior workmen, nominally working at the list price, are in the habit of allowing a discount from it.

in securing for a greater or smaller number of workmen in that trade a rate of wages more or less fictitiously high;—wherever the success of a union has been most complete, foreign competition has been most successful, and the number of men year after year employed in that particular trade, though earning higher wages perhaps, smaller and smaller in proportion to the world's consumption of the goods they make;—and therefore, as institutions whose tendency has been to cripple trade, this Chamber regards them as an evil. It does not see any reason for thinking that any substantial benefit which the Sheffield trades may have obtained under the old system would not have been equally or even more completely secured without the assistance of trades' unions. It is possible that there might have been fewer men who would earn outrageously high wages, but a very much larger number could have earned moderate wages continuously, and with the additional satisfactory knowledge that Sheffield was retaining and increasing her trades. Nothing but a steady demand for goods can enable employers to give good wages, and strikes disturb demand, and strikes are created by unions. Competition, either as regards quality, quantity, or despatch, would and will still secure an average rate of wages, as high to any set of workmen as a union professes to be able to obtain, and without any bad feeling between employer and employed.

"14th. This Chamber is not able to suggest any remedy for the evils created by trades' unions here. Unless it is much mistaken, the remedy will come to Sheffield in the form of a gradual decline and ultimate extinction of all trades which are controlled by unions, unless in the meanwhile the men see fit to so remodel them as to assist rather than check the operations of their employers who have to seek markets for what the men produce.

"It may be stated in conclusion, that those trades in Sheffield which have been controlled by unions, have as a general rule made little if any progress, compared with the increased consumption of the goods they produce; while those trades free from the operation of unions have made steady and surprising progress;—and further, that the wages earned in the last class of trades are equal to if not greater than those earned in the first class, by skilled workmen.

"JOHN JOBSON SMITH,
"*President of the Chamber.*

In conclusion, I may remark that it would be obviously improper to draw any comprehensive inferences from facts so partial as those which have been stated. The practical working of trades' societies in Sheffield is only part of the much larger subject of the working of such societies generally; and this again is quite distinct from the general question how far combinations of workmen to regulate wages and conditions of labour are economically justifiable. All that the most correctly ascertained and carefully collected facts can do is to supply a verification of the deductions of science, if they harmonise with those deductions, and to put inquirers on the trace of a truer

theory if they are in contradiction to them. The outrages which take place at Sheffield do not supply an argument against properly managed combinations; mere abstinence from them, as from political agitation, and the incidental benefits conferred on workmen out of employment, when it might just as well be rendered by provident clubs, do not form an argument in favour of combinations to regulate wages and the conditions of labour. What has chiefly to be guarded against on this subject is hasty inference from the experience of particular and perhaps peculiarly situated trades and places.

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

LEGISLATION AFFECTING LABOUR,

AND

THE CONDITION OF THE WORKING CLASSES IN FRANCE.

IN A LETTER

BY M. LOUIS BLANC.*

13, GEORGE STREET, PORTMAN SQUARE, *July 27th*, 1860.

SIR,—In compliance with your request, I beg to give you the following details on the points mentioned in your letter of the 21st instant:—

There is nothing in France which may be aptly likened to "Trades' Unions" as they exist in England.† But if you wish to have an accurate account of the origin, working, and progress of the "Co-operative Associations" to which the revolution of 1848 gave birth, and many of which are, at present, not only existing, but thriving, you will find it in the book I published about two years ago, under the title, "Historical Revelations."

You are aware, I suppose, that the establishment of the "Co-operative Associations," initiated by myself, when president of the "Government Labour Commission," had absolutely nothing to do with the most absurd and fatal establishment of those "national workshops," which were nothing better and nothing else than the *regimental* embodiment of thousands of workmen of different trades, aggregated pell-mell, and set upon a kind of labour not less unprofitable than ridiculous. The strange and almost inconceivable facility with which public opinion in Europe has been brought to father upon me the "national workshops," in spite of the official documents, and of the very confessions of the real contrivers, all proving beyond possibility of dispute that the "national workshops" were established by my adversaries in the council, notwithstanding my resistance, in direct opposition to my views, and for the express purpose of coun-

* The following letter, written in answer to inquiries addressed to M. Louis Blanc, is published by permission of the author. The information which it contains will, it is believed, be acceptable to those who are interested in the subject to which the present volume is devoted. The thanks of the Committee are due to M. Louis Blanc for his consent to the publication of his letter.—ED.

† In my book, "Historical Revelations," I used the word "trades' unions" only to express the gathering of all the workmen belonging to the same trade, and because I knew of no other word by which I could translate into English the French word "corporation."

terbalancing my influence, is one of the most striking illustrations on record of the power of calumny. Should you entertain any doubt on the subject, you have only to glance at Chapter IX. of the above-mentioned book. The evidence there adduced is decisive.

As regards what is termed in France "Compagnonnage," I beg to invite your attention to a little book published, some years ago, by M. Agricol Perdiguier. It will give you an insight into that singular institution, which derives its origin from the period anterior to the revolution of 1789.

It was then a general opinion amongst the operatives, that no workman could be considered to have completed his education, as such, unless he had travelled all over France, whence the name of "Compagnon du tour de France" given to the travelling workman.

The "Compagnonnage" is still extant, but it does not extend to the whole of the working classes.

A curious feature of this institution is that, in almost every town, there is a woman elected by those belonging to the fraternity, who is called "la mère"—the mother—and whose business it is to afford shelter, assistance, and protection to the travelling "Compagnon" when he reaches the place of her residence.

In answer to your inquiry, whether there be a trustworthy statement of French legislation as affecting the system of apprenticeship, hours of labour, rates of wages, and combinations of workmen, I am sorry to say that I know of no book in which you can find the information you want; but I think it is in my power to indicate to you some of its most important features.

Prud'hommes.—French legislation affects labour through the Institution of "Prud'hommes."

The "Conseil des Prud'hommes," which was for the first time instituted at Lyons as early as 1803, is a sort of tribunal established by law for settling, by means of conciliation, any dispute that may arise between the employers and the employed, or, as the case may be, for delivering judgment, as far as these contests are concerned—the judgment being final whenever it refers to a sum of money not exceeding £8, but, if above this sum, being susceptible of revision by the "Tribunal de Commerce."

The character of the law which regulated the "Institution des Prud'hommes" previously to the revolution of 1848 is strikingly illustrated by the following article of the decree issued on the 11th of June, 1809:—"The 'Conseil des Prud'hommes' will be composed of masters and workmen; but in no case will the number of the latter be equal to that of the former."

In 1848 it was deemed necessary to re-organize and improve the "Institution des Prud'hommes."

It was, therefore, enacted by law, passed on the 27th of May and 9th of June, 1848:—

That in the "Conseil des Prud'hommes" the two conflicting interests should be represented by an equal number of employers and employed;

That this number should be neither below six nor above twenty-six, and should in any case be an even number;

That the "Prud'hommes" belonging to the class of employers should be elected by the employed from a list of candidates presented by the employers;

That the "Prud'hommes" belonging to the class of the employed should be elected by the employers from a list of candidates presented by the employed;

That in the event of the votes in the council being equally divided the president should have a casting vote;

That the council should be alternately presided over by an employer elected by the employed, and by an employed elected by the employers.

The object of these provisions was to operate as a check upon the antagonistic feelings which the opposition of interests is likely to generate; they were intended to bring together as much as possible two classes of men, united at present by no other link than that which exists between buyers and sellers.

The empire does not seem to have taken the same view of the case; for the provision just mentioned has been thus altered, on the 4th of June, 1853:—"The employers shall elect the employer-Prud'hommes separately; and in like manner shall the employed elect the employed-Prud'hommes."

So, as matters now stand, the masters and the men are two armies drawn up in battle array, and ready to meet face to face. Organised antagonism seems to have been substituted for organised conciliation.

In another point of paramount importance has the law of June, 1848, been altered by the law of June, 1853.

The president of the "conseil des Prud'hommes," instead of being alternately elected by the workmen, if a master, and by the masters, if a workman, is now to be appointed by the Emperor; and so are to be the vice-presidents, whilst on the prefect, in each department, is conferred the privilege of appointing and the power of dismissing the secretaries, upon the president's proposal.

I need not observe that the object of these new provisions is to make the relations between employers and employed quite subservient to political purposes, and thereby to supply imperial despotism with a fresh weapon.

However, I must give Napoleon credit for using this weapon in such a manner as is calculated to wheedle into submission to his sway the least enlightened portion of the working classes; for the watchword of the presidents in the "conseils des Prud'hommes" seems to be, ever since the empire was re-established: "Let us turn the scale in favour of the operatives"; and I have it from workmen thoroughly acquainted with all that refers to their class, that, whereas under the reign of Louis Philippe the masters mostly carried their cause, it is just the reverse which happens now—the imperial policy being to indemnify the working men by some material advantages for the loss of those lofty, ennobling enjoyments which man

derives from the sense of his self-dependence secured, and of his dignity unimpaired.

It is to be remarked that there are many places in France where no "Conseil des Prud'hommes" has been as yet established; and it would be desirable that such an institution should be extended to every town in France, were the principle—which I take to be unobjectionable—fairly and properly carried into practice.

Moreover, the jurisdiction of the "Prud'hommes" is too restricted, being confined, in most cases, to the settlement of questions merely relating to wages; and there is little doubt it would be fruitful in more beneficent results, if made to embrace all matters connected with labour.

Hours of Labour.—In reference to hours of labour, I must observe that the first demand urged by the working men in Paris the day after the Revolution of 1848, was the shortening of the hours of labour. A general meeting summoned by myself was held at the Luxembourg. The question having been brought under the consideration both of the employers and the workmen, was calmly discussed; and the majority of the employers having yielded of their own accord to the workmen's request, the consequence was the issue by the Provisional Government of a decree shortening the hours of labour from eleven to ten in Paris, and from twelve to eleven in the provinces. This decree was issued on the 2nd of March, 1848, but was abrogated as soon as the re-actionists got the upper hand, that is, in September, 1848, when it was enacted that the day's work in factories should not exceed twelve hours—which was a milder form of expressing that it could last twelve hours.

The following are the provisions of the law of the 22nd of March, 1841, which regulates the intervention of the state in behalf of children.

No child under eight years of age is allowed to be employed, either in a factory where more than twenty operatives are gathered, or in any establishment where there is a steam-engine.

Children, from the age of eight to that of twelve, must not be set to work for more than eight hours out of twenty-four, with an interval of rest

Children, from the age of *twelve* to the age of sixteen, may be set to work *twelve hours out of twenty-four*, but not longer, with intervals of rest. Their labour must be performed in the daytime, *i.e.*, between five o'clock in the morning and nine o'clock in the evening.

Children, under thirteen years of age, are prohibited from working in the night time, unless the standing still of an hydraulic machine, or some urgent repair, should make it necessary.

No child under twelve is to be admitted into a factory, unless his parents furnish proof that he frequents a school, either public or private.

Those guilty of any infringement of the law respecting the labour of children, are liable to a fine not exceeding 15 francs, for each child

thus unduly employed; but in no instance is the total penalty allowed to exceed 200 francs (£8).

In case of a repetition of the offence, the fine is raised from 15 francs to a sum neither less than 16 francs nor more than 100 francs, for each child, the whole penalty ranging in like manner from 200 francs to 500 francs.

Consequently, a manufacturer might violate the law twice, by twice setting to work any number of children in his employment under twelve years of age, for any number of hours above the maximum of the law, without incurring any worse penalty than a £20 fine.

Apprenticeship.—The law which regulates apprenticeship was passed on the 22nd and 24th of March, 1851.

The apprentice-indenture may be drawn up either as a public or a private deed. It may even be agreed upon by word of mouth. Any such persons as notaries, secretaries of "Conseils des Prud'-hommes" and clerks of justices of peace, are empowered to keep the apprentice-indenture. Entry must be made in the apprentice-indenture, first of the name, Christian name, age and trade of the master; second of the name, Christian name, age and residence of the apprentice; third of the names, Christian names, trade and residence of his father and mother, or, in their default, of his guardian; fourth of the date of the contract and of how long it is to last; fifth of all conditions connected with boarding, accommodation, &c.

The indenture must be signed by the master and by the representatives of the apprentice.

No one, under one and twenty years of age, is allowed to receive apprentices under age.

No bachelor or widower is allowed to house, as apprentices, girls under age.

Those are prohibited from receiving apprentices who have been sentenced for felony or for outrage against morals.

The master is bound to treat his apprentice with fatherly kindness, to watch over his conduct, to acquaint his parents with any fault he may commit or any vicious propensity he may exhibit, and to give them immediate notice of anything of a nature to call for their intervention.

Never must the master require of the apprentice any service unconnected with his trade, unless formally entitled to do so by the indenture. In no case, is the apprentice to be set upon a work beyond his strength.

The daily labour of apprentices under fourteen years of age is not allowed to exceed ten hours. Nor is the daily labour of those between fourteen and sixteen allowed to exceed twelve hours. Those under sixteen must not be set to work in the night time, that is, between five o'clock in the morning and nine o'clock in the evening.

In no case are apprentices bound to work on Sundays.

If an apprentice under sixteen years of age know not how to read, to write, or to calculate, his master is bound to allow him time for his instruction, two hours a day being deemed sufficient.

Obedience and respect are due by the apprentice to his master. If, during his apprenticeship, he has been ill, or absent for more than fifteen days, he is bound, when out of his time, to make it up to his master.

The two first months of apprenticeship are considered as a period of trial, during which the deed may be annulled, if such be the will of one of the contracting parties. In this case, by none of the parties is any indemnity to be claimed unless previously agreed upon.

Should one of them happen either to die or to be enlisted as a soldier, or to be sentenced for the crimes above mentioned, the contract is dissolved by right.

As regards girls under age, it is also dissolved by right at the death of the master's wife.

Livret.—The provisions of the law of May, 1851, respecting what is called the "Livret," are worth mentioning.

The "Livret" is a little book which every workman is bound to show the master by whom he wishes to be employed, in order to prove that he has fulfilled his engagements towards his last employer.

By law passed on the 21st of May, 1851, it had been enacted that the "Livret" should remain in the hands of the employer till the work agreed upon was completed, and that, till then, the employer should be entitled to withhold the "Livret," unless the workman was prevented from fulfilling his engagements by circumstances beyond his control. This has been changed by a more recent law, which runs thus:

The moment an employer receives a workman, the date of the admission of the latter must be entered in the "Livret." The employer must enter in a separate register the name and Christian name of the workman, the name and residence of his last master, further, the amount of money the workman may have received in advance. This being done, the "Livret" must be delivered to the workman and remain in his hands, till he leaves, when an entry is to be made in the "Livret" of the date of his departure, of the discharge of his engagements, and of the amount of such advances as may have been made to him by his master, if not exceeding thirty francs; for no larger sum is allowed to be entered in the "Livret," and if the employer happens to have advanced more than thirty francs, he must run the risk of it himself.

It is easy to perceive that the object of the institution of the "Livret" is to bring the workman under subjection. In fact, the "Livret" enables any master who bears a grudge to one of his workmen, to denounce him in this kind of industrial passport, and so to shut him out from all possibility of being employed by other persons. It is true that, apparently for the sake of preventing the evil, the law expressly forbids the employer to make any remarks in the "Livret," either favourable or unfavourable, concerning the workman; but this prohibition is one which the employers can easily elude by using, instead of written words, some conventional signs hardly perceptible, whose meaning—as is the case in the craft of Freemasons—is a mystery to every one but the members of the fraternity.

Such, at all events, is the idea entertained by the working men, who regard the "Livret" as a badge of social slavery, and hold it in perfect abhorrence.

Besides, it brings them, to a certain extent, into political bondage, owing to the fact that the "Livret" is delivered, all over the kingdom, by the mayors, who have been made entirely to depend upon government; whilst, at Lyons, it is delivered by the prefect of the department, and, at Paris, by the prefect of police.

It may be said that, under the reign of Louis Philippe, the law relating to the "Livret" was never seriously enforced; the imperial government, on the contrary, takes special care that it should be strictly carried into effect. The most recent law on the subject contains the following article:—"The employers cannot (*ne peuvent*) employ a workman, unless the latter be provided with a 'Livret' in due form."

Strikes in France are forbidden by law. The penal code, whilst equally prohibiting all combinations of masters for lowering wages, and all combinations of workmen for raising them, had most unjustly attached to the violation of the law a harder penalty in the second than in the first case; hence the law of the 27th November, 1849, prescribing the same penalty in both cases, that is imprisonment from six days to three months, and a fine of from sixteen to three thousand francs. As to the promoters of any such movement, they are liable to imprisonment from two to five years.

This law rests on the principle of distributive justice. But it is important to remark that, while the masters have been allowed privately to discuss their class interests in committees, called "chambres d'entrepreneurs," no such privilege has ever been conferred upon the workmen. The consequence is, that a combination of employers can be formed with impunity, provided some precautions be taken to screen the promoters, whereas the originators of a similar movement in behalf of the employed have no regular means of secretly concerting measures, and therefore little chance of escaping the penalty; which is tantamount to saying, that this law does not differ from such as have been defined cobwebs which stop flies, and are broken through by wasps.

Here, sir, I must pause, as it would carry me too far to go into more minute details. Moreover, I think this sufficient to enable you to form a general idea of the condition of the working classes in France, as connected with French legislation.

I understand that a meeting of the "National Association for the Promotion of Social Science" is to be held in Glasgow. If you deem it advisable to bring the present communication under the notice of the meeting, as having been made to you by me, I have no objection to your doing so, as I am ready to answer for the accuracy of my statements.

I am, Sir, obediently yours,

LOUIS BLANC.

To F. H. HILL, ESQ.

AN ACCOUNT

OF

THE DISCUSSION AT GLASGOW,

ON THURSDAY SEPT. 27TH, 1860,

ON THE MOTION THAT THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON TRADES' SOCIETIES BE RECEIVED.

THE RIGHT HON. SIR JOHN S. PAKINGTON, BART., M.P., PRESIDING.

IT has been thought desirable to append to this volume a fuller account than has appeared, or could be conveniently inserted elsewhere, of the discussion at Glasgow, which followed the reading of the Report of the Committee on Thursday, September 27th. On the previous day, papers on the following subjects had been read by the gentlemen whose names are annexed :—

(1.) *Trades' Unions and their Tendencies.* By Edmund Potter, F.R.S., Manchester.

(2.) *The Objects of Trades' Unions.* By A. F. Hunter, of the Glasgow Council of United Trades.

(3.) *Trades' Unions, and their Effects on Society.* By Peter Allan.

(4.) *Trades' Unions and their Objects.* By William Caw.

(5.) *Workman and Master.* By Thomas Pringle.

(6.) *Trades' Unions not injurious to the Welfare of Society.* By Alexander Frazer.

(7.) *The Improvement necessary for the more effectual Working of Trades' Unions.* By the Representatives of the United Joiners of Glasgow and the West of Scotland.

As these papers will be reprinted, either in full or in a condensed form, in the *Transactions* of the Association, it is unnecessary, with one exception, to do more than enumerate them here. The exception in question is the paper of Mr. Potter, on Trades' Unions and their Tendencies. As this paper was frequently referred to in this discussion, a short abstract of its leading points may be useful. After admitting that "strikes as the action, and the almost inevitable result of commercial bargaining for labour, will always exist," and are criminal only "when intimidation or force is used to compel a bargain by either side," Mr. Potter proceeded to contend:—That labour must be considered as a mere purchaseable article, like all other commodities, and ought to be bought and sold, and weighed and

measured accordingly ; . . . and that all the law ought to do, so far as the adult is concerned, is to define the standard of measure and currency to be used. In the contest between the owners of capital and the mere seller of physical labour, the prime moving power must be the mind or will of the purchaser of labour; *he* it is who seeks the worker, states his wishes, offers the contract, and directs the mode of operation. . . . There can be no other ground for interference than the supposed helplessness of one of the parties. This helplessness on the part of the labourer is due to the fact that, during a contest with a trade union, or even a combination of trade unions, the capitalist can employ his capital elsewhere, at some rate of interest, though to do so may involve loss and some disarrangement of his business. The labourer, on the contrary, fixed to a certain district, fixed still more by his union, fettered again by the want of savings, is compelled to seek strength by union. Trades' unions, like all protective combinations, arise from jealousy, fear and weakness ; and this weakness, again, is traceable to the fact that the labourer is not the capitalist he might be. Two-thirds of the working class might save ;—not one-third does save ; hence their want of power and their anxiousness for combinations. The capitalist, be he the owner of fifty, or of fifty thousand pounds, can think and operate as he likes, and he can do both coolly, maintaining his individual judgment. The unionist can do neither, he must move even to direct misery by the will of the multitude, the very large majority of whom may be less educated and less thoughtful than himself. Many men have sacrificed the advancement of a life to the narrow subjection of a trades' union—some from honourable motives, but in most cases from bodily fear and a want of moral courage. First-class workmen have consented to abide by a uniform rate of wages, who, but for so doing, might have become masters. In regard to the alleged indifference of the masters as to the cause of strikes, this arises from the conviction that the fact of their being purchasers of labour, a saleable and purchaseable commodity, ought not to subject their transactions to the special interference of third parties. The condition and education of the present generation of working men should make them, if they chose, as honestly independent of the master class as does competition between buyers and sellers of other commodities. Practically, unless demand and consequent supply can be left level for all classes of labour, it must prove itself a commodity, and sink or rise in value. With respect to the admission of working men to a partnership with their employers, the working man, as a rule, consuming his wages, leaves no savings to form capital as a security ; nay, if he were a fair partner, getting nothing when nothing was earned, starvation or the workhouse would be his doom during every period of panic and stagnation. The partners, moreover, could not by any process be brought to such a level, intellectually or pecuniarily, as to enable them to find a basis for a division of profits. The success of all private concerns, and more particularly of those larger ones which are constantly looked upon by the unsound philanthropist class as those

which ought to be shared in by the workman, is mainly owing to the energetic employment and the working of saved capital, and not to large profits. If the workmen chose to use their small savings, they can now avail themselves of partnerships in almost every trade, under the Limited Liability Act; not perhaps, with a promise of success, as, except in rare cases, they cannot be successful in competing with individual energy and capital. It is worse than idle to try to force a community of interests, where competition, as in every other case, alone can give progress. Unsoundness must attach itself to every purely trade union, whether it be a burial club, a society for the regulation of wages, or for the enforcement of partnerships. The executive supported by the mere majority, that majority the least educated, will offer a retarding influence. Further, no trade union ever encouraged invention. Hundreds of inventions are not used because trades' unions are strong enough to prevent them. This is shown in the case of brickmaking machines, and thus millions of bad bricks are annually made, and thus society is injured. Unfortunately, the working man continues, in almost every trade—in policy or feeling at least—the unionist. One of the most mischievous fallacies of the day is the idea that labourers have the power to form successful and useful combinations, and that masters will voluntarily give in all that had hitherto been tried by force to obtain from them; and that between employers and employed the relations will be those of voluntary partnership. There is a strong distinction between associations for competitive trade purposes, or for national ones, and trades' unions, which are so many unsound monopolies. Associations are voluntary—unions are entered into from class feeling, from fear, and for restriction. No trade union, no protective monopoly, has ever really benefited a people. It may have benefited, temporarily, a small class, but it injures the mass. The masters—far from wishing to shelter their own class—advise competition. Education and industry are the best securities for individual and national progress. The conclusions Mr. Potter comes to are—that trades' unions are founded for an unsound purpose; that consequently their moral effects are bad; that society can be best aided by free and open competition; and that education and forethought alone can secure to every one his fair reward.

The necessity and beneficial effects of trades' unions were vindicated in the remaining papers read before the section, with the exception of those of Mr. Allan and Mr. Pringle; the former of whom contended that trades' unions had no good effect on the elevation and improvement of the working classes; the latter, that their interference with prices was pernicious and injurious.

The CHAIRMAN said, that although he had not had the honour of being president of any of the departments on this occasion, he had been requested to preside at the discussion which would take place, founded, he believed, on a report of a committee appointed by the Council of the Association to consider the question, so extremely interesting and important to the trade of the country—namely, the institution of

trades' unions; and, he understood also, the organization of strikes, which had arisen in various parts of the country. He felt it his duty to accede to the request, influenced partly by the feeling that his own mind was perfectly impartial on the subject. He was quite convinced that it was a subject open to great discussion and various differences of opinion; and he had to express a hope, especially considering the interesting and somewhat exciting nature of the subject, that it would be calmly discussed; and discussed entirely on abstract and general grounds. And he was sure they would consider that he was only fulfilling the duty he had undertaken in occupying the chair, if he presumed upon that authority to interfere if there was any improper deviation from those principles of calm discussion. It now only remained for him to submit to them whether it was their pleasure that in the conducting of the discussion they would adopt a rule—which had been adopted in other rooms, and in the adoption of which he himself had been instrumental—to limit the period to be occupied by each speaker. He would therefore be glad to be informed what was their pleasure, as it would be better to determine at the outset whether they would have any, and what limit; and whatever the arrangement might be, let them start with the understanding that they would adhere to it.

On a show of hands being taken, it was agreed by a large majority to fix a limit to the time allotted to each speaker.

The CHAIRMAN said the next question was, what the limit should be—ten minutes or fifteen minutes, or more?

The meeting by a large majority determined that the limit should be ten minutes.

Mr. RATHBONE then read the Report.

Mr. THOMAS HUGHES said, his duty on this occasion, in opening this debate, was one which was chiefly official, as he had been, in conjunction with Mr. Rathbone, the secretary of the committee; and therefore he would *pro formâ* move the reception of the Report. He did not suppose that in a meeting like that it would be either attainable or judicious to move the adoption of the Report. The volume contained accounts of several of the chief disputes between master and men which had taken place for the last few years. The preparation of these reports had been entrusted to individual members of the committee: the documents and information relating to a strike were given to one member, and the other members gave him all the assistance in their power; but the compiling of a report from these sources was entrusted to a single member, and he only was responsible for it. It was impossible, on an occasion like that, exactly to make up one's mind as to where to end, or where to begin; but it was not very necessary that he should go into his own opinions, as they were, on the whole, satisfactorily represented in the Report which had been read. He believed he should have an opportunity at the end of the discussion of making any remarks that it might occur to him to make; and in the meantime he felt that he should be standing in the way of persons who ought to be heard if he were to detain

them. But before he sat down he thought it must be satisfactory to them to feel that this discussion would be a *bonâ fide* discussion. It must be very satisfactory to the committee to find that their labours had not been thrown away, since both the members of trades' unions and their employers had been well and ably represented in the papers read, and the discussion which took place yesterday. As to what the chairman had said with reference to the temper of the discussion, he felt certain that it would be all that it should be; and he would especially impress on members of trades' unions, that when they saw employers come there to take the trouble of addressing them on the subject, they should remember that those employers had in so doing shown the very best feeling towards them. The old tone was, "We will recognise no interference between ourselves and our men;" and therefore he said that any member of a trades' union who came there in that capacity owed a great debt to the employers who had come there to discuss the matter with them. While expressing his thanks to those gentlemen who spoke yesterday—and though he wished particularly to put himself in their point of view, and to look at matters with their eyes—still he was struck with one difference, which he feared was a radical difference, between himself and them; and to that point he would like to draw their attention. The foundation of that difference was, that they treated the labour of their men, which was in fact the lives of their men, on the same principles as those on which they treated a dead commodity. They most rigorously applied to it the same law of supply and demand as they applied to any other commodity, thereby putting the living man and inanimate things on the same footing. Well, that might be a capital rule of thumb. They might lay down a law and act up to it; but the rule would not work. What had brought on all the discussion as to the antagonism of classes? Simply the attempt to carry that rule rigorously out. He believed that had raised those disputes, and would continue to the end of time to raise them. They must look from a different point of view. They must treat the living man according to different rules from those which they applied to the dead material. This committee was certainly a remarkable instance of the change which came over persons when they inquired into facts, instead of swallowing what the *Times* or any other newspaper might say. Here was a committee of thirty gentlemen, amongst whom were several influential employers. Two-thirds of these gentlemen started in the belief that as a rule trades' unions were in the hands of mere demagogues, not working men. But, he believed, they were now unanimous in the conclusion that this was not so. As was stated in the Report, they believed that the leaders of trade societies were generally men who represented the feeling of their class, and also able and proficient workmen, who really lived by their trade, and who had little to do with agitations. They (the committee) were at first almost unanimous in their belief that trades' unions fostered bad blood and ill-feeling between masters and men; but from the histories of all the strikes he had gone into, he was of

opinion that trades' unions tended to stop strikes, and not to foster them. He hoped that one result of this inquiry would be, that the masters and men would in their own trades come to a reasonable means of settling their disputes without strikes. He felt that there certainly might be tribunals in each trade in which masters and men might be fairly represented, which should take into account not only minor questions which arose in that trade, but the more important question of wages. These tribunals, which he hoped shortly to see, would have a great influence on the trades: questions would be brought before them; public opinion would back up their decisions, and would enforce them upon any party who might wish to get out of them. That was not only his own opinion merely, but that of one of the largest employers in Yorkshire, who suggested that a society should be formed for the purpose of introducing these boards of arbitration for trades. He would now move that the Report be received.

Sir ARCHIBALD ALISON.—In opening this debate, I trust I shall not forget the very salutary caution given to the speakers, not to deviate from the temperate expression of opinion, and not to give way to any feeling of exasperation or hostility, nor to trespass on the limits of time. I quite concur in the statements made in the Report; but I think there is a great deal more in the case—a great deal more of a practical kind which is not stated, in regard to the differences between masters and workmen. In order to illustrate what I have to say on this subject, I shall in a few words state the views entertained by those who represent the interests of capital, and by those who represent the interests of labour. The masters—who have carried with them, as the men will think unfortunately, the suffrages of society—are of opinion that trades' unions are the greatest social evils that now exist in society; that worse than plague, pestilence, and famine, they combine the whole influence of these three things: for they are a plague spot on society, a pestilence on the human mind, and bring famine on all concerned. That is the opinion entertained by the masters of them. But I would ask, what is the opinion of the workmen as to them? Their opinion is, that trades' unions are indispensable to compensate for the weight of capital in an advanced community; that such is the concentrated power of capital, concentrated in one man or in a certain number of men, that, unless men combine together and meet that power by the organization of numbers on the other hand, there must inevitably ensue, from the principle of competition, the prostration of industry manacled in the fetters of capital. That is the view that the workmen take of it; and I think they have reason to believe that if they were deprived of the power of combination their wages would gradually, by the force of competition, be brought down to such a point that they would be reduced to the condition of the serfs of Russia or the ryots of Hindostan. I have laid before you, candidly and honestly, the views of both parties; and I will now state what I think of these opposite opinions. I must first observe, that no one has any concep-

tion of the magnitude of the devastation caused by these strikes. It was said by a workman at that exhilarating meeting which we had last night in the City Hall, that no human being could imagine the amount of suffering that prevails amongst the working classes in consequence of the variation of trade and the depression of industry which often visit a great commercial country like this. While that is perfectly true, I could not help thinking at the time how much greater, and how much more lamentable, is the distress caused by strikes, which often follow commercial depression; and how mournful is the feeling which one has on seeing the storm gathering, and knowing that suffering and misery are unavoidably to be diffused throughout the country by causes beyond our control, and that it is quite certain that that suffering will be terribly and indefinitely augmented by the strikes which follow. I do not think that it is possible to exaggerate the evils of strikes. I have been brought into contact, officially, as public prosecutor and as sheriff, with five or six great strikes in this country, and I am sure I am within bounds when I say that each of these strikes has cost the labouring classes of Lanarkshire not less than £500,000. That is not the loss sustained merely in wages of the labourers; it is the loss divided by them with the persons with whom they deal, and by the persons who depend on their labour. In short, for every one who strikes, there are at least six or eight other persons thrown into distress who have never struck, who are adverse perhaps to strikes, but who nevertheless are the innocent participators in the suffering they produce; for they have this evil, that the distress touches not only the individual, but a vast number of third persons who may be adverse to the strikes. In contemplating this subject, it appears to me that there are two points which are of vital importance with the view of showing how the evil may be best remedied. The first of these is the great and growing improvement in the way in which trades' unions are conducted. When I say that, I think it is owing not so much to the change of the law in 1825, when trades' unions were legalized, as to the growing influence of public opinion. It has been my painful duty to discover and investigate crimes of the most atrocious kind connected with trades' unions for twenty years after that Act was passed. The first occasion on which I was brought officially into contact with trades' unions was in 1827. The trial I then conducted was one in which a party was put to the bar for throwing vitriol in the face of a young woman, which made her blind for life. The next trial was for throwing vitriol on a young man who had acted contrary to the injunctions of the trades' unions, in 1828; his clothes were produced in court, and they were actually burnt to cinders by the effect of what was thrown upon him. The third trial was a very remarkable one—a man was brought into court who had been shot in the back by a man acting for the trades' union committee. He was brought into court on a stretcher, almost in the agonies of death, to identify the man who had shot him. Another case occurred in 1837, which ended in the conviction of the cotton-

spinners' assassins. In that memorable case it was distinctly proved that thirty-nine manufacturing houses in Glasgow appointed delegates, that these delegates appointed a secret select committee, that this committee met in a dark room with hired assassins, and that they prepared a list of the masters in Glasgow who were to be assassinated. The first party who was assassinated was a workman, who was shot in the back and died; and that proceeding led to the trial which afterwards made so great an impression, and which was of such great benefit to society. The next case was in 1842. It was connected, not with the cotton-spinners, but with the colliers. On that occasion the people absolutely rose in insurrection, and during several months, every night, there were parties of fifty or sixty men who went about to plunder the country, and it was with great difficulty that the evil was stopped by the intervention of the military authority. I have stated what was the case then with trades' unions; but now, I am happy to say, the case is very different. There was a considerable strike in 1852, attended with no violence; and there was a great strike in 1857, attended with no violence whatever. The latter was a strike of the colliers of Lanarkshire, Renfrewshire, Stirlingshire, and neighbouring counties. No fewer than 30,000 men were engaged in that strike, and they must have thrown no less than 100,000 people out of employment; but in my county not a single case of violence occurred, and the Lord Advocate informed me, that not a single case was reported from any of the counties concerned in it. I conclude, therefore, that there is a great and growing improvement in this respect, and that trades' unions have become conscious that they injure themselves more than their masters by such conduct, which I hope will never again disgrace the people of this great country. I will explain now why I think trades' unions in themselves are not only proper, but are a necessary balance in the fabric of society. I think without them capital would become far too powerful, and workmen would be much beaten down. What I say, I address to the trades' unionists themselves, and I wish to point out a mode by which they may avoid the disasters which their former conduct has caused, and gain their legitimate objects without incurring the terrible hazard of inducing evils to society. In the first place, I concur in the able Report that has been read, that nothing tends so much to conciliate the working classes as kindly intercourse between master and men. I may say that there is no human being in the country has received a greater amount of forbearance from, and has greater cause of gratitude to, trades' unions than myself. As a proof of the candour of trades' unions, I may state that shortly after the cotton-spinners' trial, in which I had been obliged in so rigorous a way to proceed against the unionists, a deputation came to me and offered to make me trustee of its funds: a greater instance of moderation and trust was never exhibited. I would also recommend, as it is for their own interests, that trades' unions should attend to the circumstances under which a strike will be successful and when it must

fail. My advice to trades' unions which have consulted me has been, "Don't strike except when prices are rising; but never strike when prices are falling." But that is just the reverse of what they sometimes do, and I think there is no greater fallacy pervading society than the impression that strikes must be successful, although I believe there are strikes which are perfectly successful.

Mr. EDMUND POTTER, of Manchester, did not think he should trespass on their time for ten minutes; but he felt anxious to reply to the remarks of Mr. Hughes. He had read a paper on this subject, and therefore there was no necessity that he should go into it again. He took a deep interest in it for this reason:—he had a great respect for the benevolence and intelligence of the members of this committee, but he had very great doubts as to the soundness of their economical views. The question he wished to keep himself to was this—is it a sound economical opinion that labour is like every other commodity, and to be treated as such? he contended that they could not treat labour in any other way. He had as great a respect for labour as any man, and his object, as well as theirs, was to educate and give moral power to the workmen, and by that means prepare the labourer of to-day for the master of to-morrow—in that city (Glasgow) how many men were there who had risen from the ranks. But his opinion was, that labour was a commodity, and that they could not treat it as anything else, though he would treat it as tenderly as he could. It was an article, saleable, and purchaseable. He wanted to know whether they who were in certain trades were to be subjected to a different class of rules to those which prevailed in other classes of life—he wanted to know how they meant to regulate labour, for nothing could be more detrimental than any attempt to regulate the supply of any article whatever. Was the rule that applied to the purchase of the porter's labour not applicable to the barrister's? If it was not, he should like to know why? If they attempt to interfere with labour they encourage combination, but he did not object to co-operation. He asserted that in combinations people looked to the interests of their own trade, and not to the public good. Their object was to prevent competition. They had a perfect right to combine in any way they chose, provided they did not interfere with the privileges of other parties. Combinations were antagonistic to progression in every way; and he considered them bad in morality. He thought competition was the great safeguard of freedom, and he did protest againt any particular class being subjected to the interference of third parties. Every person knew his own trade, and ought to be left free to carry it out, and he therefore objected to the interference of third persons as arbitrators between men and masters. Education in this country had increased in every way for the last twenty years, and it was that education which had worked such great benefits amongst the people: the less they had of narrow sectional combinations the better, for they could only promote squabbles of all sorts.

Mr. HADFIELD, M.P., in allusion to a remark in the General

Report of Committee as to the system adopted by the trades' unions connected with the hardware trades of Sheffield, said he had spoken with a number of workmen with reference to the outrages in that town, and they assured him that they disavowed them entirely: they said they were ready at all times to give every assistance to the police officers in the detection of the perpetrators of those outrages. At a recent dinner of the Amalgamated Trades of Sheffield, the mayor, who was in the chair, denounced these acts of violence in the strongest manner possible, amidst the applause of the whole assembly, and stated that he (the mayor) never had had a quarrel in his life with his men. The Corporation had recently solicited the Government to send down commissioners to make an inquiry into the outrages; the Government refused for reasons of their own; but it was his (Mr. Hadfield's) firm opinion that the unions of Sheffield perfectly discountenanced every act of violence.

Mr. HASTINGS said he was anxious, as a member of the committee, to state his opinion, that however badly trades' unions may have occasionally been managed, and whatever harm they may have sometimes done, yet on the whole they had been advantageous to the condition of the working men, and that it would be impossible to dispense with their existence. His friend Mr. Potter asked, why the relations between labour and capital should be on a totally different footing to those which exist in other classes of society. He was reasoning from incorrect premises: he (Mr. Hastings) denied that these combinations were confined to workmen; indeed, combinations of masters were in existence long before the workmen formed them, and the masters should be the last to ask why the men formed these societies, as long as they kept within the bounds of the law. But it was not only in reference to trades that these combinations were formed; for professions had similar, or perhaps more stringent, regulations. The lawyers were the most unfortunate illustration that could have been used by Mr. Potter. Mr. Potter asked why should regulations be laid down by working men which were not laid down with regard to barristers; but they really were laid down with regard to barristers in the most stringent manner that could possibly be conceived; for amongst barristers, more than in any other profession, there were regulations as to what should be the fee for certain services; and if a barrister were taking less than the regular fee he would at once be called to account by his brethren. If Mr. Hughes, for instance, were to leave the court in which he practised, and go into a different one, he must receive fifty guineas, and could not give his services for less; and on some circuits even as much as a hundred guineas were required on a member leaving that circuit. The same with regard to the medical profession; whenever a profession was organized, the very first regulation laid down was, that the members of that profession should not pursue it under a certain rate of remuneration. Nothing, therefore, could be more unfair than to taunt the working men of this country with entertaining exceptional ideas on the subject of combination. He did

not defend trades' unions in their excesses or their errors; when they interfered with the freedom of labour, or endeavoured to check enterprise, or in any way encouraged violence, they became evil; but as long as they confined themselves to their legitimate province of organizing labour and preventing hardship to individuals, they were unquestionably good. He did not think it necessary to go into strikes in considering trades' unions; but no sane man could for one moment believe that strikes could be a blessing under any circumstances. Strikes must inflict great suffering, not only on those who are engaged in them, but also upon those who are not directly connected with them. But one very reason that trades' unions were desirable was, that they had a tendency to prevent strikes. The leaders of them were generally intelligent men, and good workmen, and possessed of the confidence of their fellow-labourers; they thus formed the means of negotiation between the men and the masters, and by that means prevented misunderstandings growing into quarrels, and ultimately terminating in strikes. It seemed to him that trades' unions had been too severely dealt with by public men and the press; and he hoped this discussion would have the effect of placing them in a better light.

Mr. FAWCETT thought that if they confined the discussion to broad general theory they would avoid that recrimination which was indulged in yesterday. Recrimination had already begun to-day—it was said that combinations existed among the masters as well as among the men. He did not think it useful to consider whether combinations that existed amongst the labourers existed also among the masters—the question was, "are these combinations profitable to the labourer or not?" If they were unprofitable, it made no difference whether they existed amongst masters or not. He wished to express his entire concurrence in the remarks of Mr. Potter, that labour ought to be considered as a commodity, to be regulated like every other commodity Political economy had been constantly appealed to; every one who had read a passage of political economy must be aware that the existence of political economy depended upon the supposition that labour in all questions of demand and supply was to be treated identically the same as any other commodity. Active competition was the condition on which the prosperity of the country depended, and therefore it was the duty of the employer to buy labour as cheap as he could. The labourers had a commodity to offer; the masters wanted to buy it; but if the men were acting together, when trade was rising they were in a better position to participate in the masters' improving profits. This proposition, as laid down by Sir Archibald Alison, could not be disproved. Of course it was impossible for him to enter into anything like a proof of it; but that he considered to be one of the great advantages which labourers gained by forming themselves into combinations. If that were the case, did it not open the satisfactory prospect that strikes must cease? for if it was true that combinations had influence to make the labourers participators in the masters' profits, the

direct tendency was to make the men copartners with the masters. They must all admit that the Report was most valuable, in having cleared up those unjust and untrue assertions which had been cast upon the characters and motives of the delegates of trades' unions; and he thought nothing could be more dishonourable than for persons, when they had not sufficiently inquired into the subject, to make aspersions on the characters of the delegates.

Mr. HENRY ASHWORTH said he appeared before them as a manufacturer, as a capitalist, as an employer of labour, and as one not unfamiliar with the operation of strikes, both from his own individual experience, and from inquiries having a wider range. He believed it would be admitted by the generality of those who were employers of labour in Lancashire, that the existence of organized bodies is essential in the condition of society in which we live. They did not complain of the existence of trades' societies, or of the policy with which they were conducted. He admitted, however, that they were now conducted in a very different spirit from that which prevailed thirty or forty years ago. One of the questions raised in this discussion had relation to the word "commodity." He was very unwilling to speak of human labour in any terms that might be deemed a disparagement of it; but he could not regard it in any other light than as a commodity. He was a manufacturer and a merchant: he was the servant of the consumer, whether at home or abroad, and that which he produced was not made for his own pleasure, but in obedience to the demand of the consumer. For the production of any article—say a piece of cloth—in addition to the plant, he required the raw material, and labour in the production of the cloth was indispensable. Should he characterize the labour as anything different or to be distinguished from the other commodities which entered into the process of manufacture of the cloth produced? Without intending any disparagement of the quality of human labour, which was indispensable in his manufacture, it could not be considered as different from any other article which they called a "commodity." One of the objects of trades' unions had been to establish a uniform rate of wages, and mostly to advance that rate. This would place the manufacturer on the stretch, and might put him at a disadvantage in his trade. It was therefore quite right and allowable that the masters should maintain their own order by combining amongst themselves for their own protection. The men took care that the masters did not trench upon their interests; and the masters on the other hand took care that the men did not trench upon their interests. Now and then differences arose between them. Arbitration had been spoken of as a means of reconciling those differences. For his part he saw no sort of prospect that the interference of third parties could avail. Both masters and labourers were the servants of consumption; the consumer was the arbitrator, and if production should cease, those who were employed must feel the effects of it. No arbitration could set them right with the manufacturer if the manufacturer had not a profit. Hence

arbitration would be a failure if it were attempted. Allusion had been made to the uniformity of payment existing in certain professions, and to the necessity of trades' unions enforcing a certain rate of wages for the men; but he very much doubted the efficiency or advantage arising in either case. He had known an instance of the kind in Lancashire. The master bleachers of cotton goods—a very important, but not a large body—established a rate of wages by which they agreed to abide; they had strong reasons for adopting a union, and they made a regulation as regards the rate of pay; but they subsequently abandoned it, and they might be sure they would not have done so if the combination had been to their advantage. The iron trade, he believed, still adhered to it; but as regards professional men, it had become so interwoven with their principles that they could not alter the practice. In the Report which had been read, it was stated that the object of trades' unions was to promote the interests of labour. Now, he would like to ascertain whether it was to promote the interests of labour in a community, or in a locality, or among a section?

Mr. Godfrey Lushington said Mr. Ashworth had alluded to the rules which trades' unions made for themselves, especially the rule as to uniform wages. He would begin by saying, that many of the rules were in the abstract most unreasonable and inconvenient to the employers. He would take three examples. One rule was, that unionists should not work with non-unionists. It was clearly in the abstract most unreasonable when a master printer wanted to bring out his newspaper, and could not at the time get a man who was connected with the union, and therefore engaged a man who was not a unionist, that the unionist men should strike, and would not work with that man;—could one suppose it possible that an Englishman should refuse to work with a man because that man was not of the same club as himself. Another rule was that prohibiting piecework; yet piecework, where practicable, was clearly the right system. A third rule imposed a uniform rate of wages for all operatives, good, bad, and indifferent. What was the reason of all this? It was because in a great number of trades a portion of the employers were men who were not worthy of the name of employers! (Cries of "Order.") He was speaking of a class of employers who hoped to succeed simply by reducing wages, so as to undersell their neighbours, and to that class of men who were not favourable to fair competition in trade. Against these employers, the protection of some such rules was necessary; for it was found with them, that, if they employed non-unionists, it was to take advantage of their isolation; that if they gave out piecework, it was to insinuate a reduction of wages; that if they were not bound by a uniform rate, they gave *less* than the market price. But then, why enforce these rules upon that class of employers who did not do this? The answer was, it was a mere matter of practice: they must have one rule for all, prohibiting piecework, enforcing uniform wages, and proper work. That things should remain in their present anomalous condition, it was hard to

believe. But how alter them? This was the question for the consideration of the meeting. Could they go back to the days before unions? No; that was impossible for many reasons, of which he would state but two. Unions, as a fact, had proved inextinguishable, even by the most penal laws, by the most determined lock-outs, and were spreading every day; and, secondly, it was pretty well established that without combination, in some form or other, fair wages could not be secured. Could they then go forward? He put it to the liberal and honest masters of Great Britain—Do you, clinging to the name of independence of your own workshops, prefer to put up with trade unions as they are, with all their rules—rules designed against unfair masters, but enforced against fair and unfair alike—rules which embarrass you every day, and have reduced by piecemeal your authority to a name—rules, above all, which lead to the chronic disasters of strikes—will you have that, or shall the masters and men mutually agree? The masters say, we will waive the shadow of undivided supremacy in our workshops; the men say, we will give up the exclusive character of our unions; both accept the form of a council, where masters and men shall meet; where rules shall be established which will give fair wages to the men, and insure to the masters a free and unshackled use of their capital; and enable all to live on friendly, peaceful, and happy terms.

Mr. Fergus said he utterly abhorred and detested strikes; but there were some cases in which it would be better if there was some regulating medium between the masters and men. About thirteen years ago he became interested in the engineers of Lanarkshire—a most intelligent class, and one which spent their evenings most rationally—but he was sorry to say that these men had fearfully deteriorated in their moral and physical condition. He set himself to find out what was the cause of the change, and he discovered it to be this:—By competition there had been a system of overtime introduced, and that overtime had worked a fearful amount of injury, both moral and physical. The normal rate of employment should be twelve hours a day, with the usual intervals; but instead of that, the men had been compelled to work overtime, and they now consequently lacked that time which formerly was devoted to moral and physical improvement. These men were very intelligent, else there would have been a strike amongst them; but it was much to their credit that a strike had never taken place. He did not say that it was the fault of the masters; but, nevertheless, it was a condition of things that required some care. The masters deplored it, and the middlemen between the masters and men said they would willingly get quit of it; and he hoped this Association would aid in doing away with it. The evil was far greater than was generally believed, and it produced amongst the men physical decay, premature death, and in some cases insanity.

Mr. Lloyd Jones thought they ought all to feel grateful to the committee for the large amount of information which they had obtained on this subject. When a gentleman engaged in manufacture

undertook to produce an article, he had to purchase the necessary things—the raw material and labour. If he went into the market to purchase the raw material, he had to give for it the ruling price of the market at that time. But holders might hold or throw their goods into the market in combination, and so regulate the prices ruling in the market. That was not unfrequently done in relation to tea, sugar, wool, and cotton; and they might read of meetings in Birmingham, where those connected with the iron trade agree to put their produce into the market in such a manner as to limit the supply. If any two had a single article for sale they had a right to consult and settle the price which they should take for it. If he had a right to stand singly, he had a right to stand in combination and in concert with those who were in the same position as himself. The moment the manufacturer wanted labour, he must go to the labourer. Singly the labourer could not get the price which he wanted for his labour; he would consult with his fellow-labourers, and they would all agree to ask a price which singly they could not obtain. Suppose they did find their combination work well, were they to follow the example of those who did not find their combination desirable? They themselves were the best judges as to whether it worked well or not. While granting that labour was a commodity, he thought it was something more. He could not get any man to consider himself a bale of cotton, and allow himself to be treated as such. The question was, how justice should be maintained as between the employer and the employed. The employer laid down his rule, which was isolation; but the employed laid down another rule for himself, that he would not consider himself as a commodity, even though it might be an educated commodity. They would not accept each other's terms, and a battle took place, and great loss and suffering were the results, as any one might see who had watched the fights of this description for the last four or five years. Each would strike the hardest blows for the injury of the other; but they would not use the wisest words for each other's benefit. He thought arbitration was the best thing that could be obtained. There were customs and certain habits of work in every trade, and any questions which might arise as to that standard could readily be settled by calm deliberation. At Nottingham the men had agreed to settle all differences by arbitration; and if they would regard each other, not as a commodity, but as men and Christian Englishmen, as they were bound to do, a great deal of good would be effected both for masters and men.

Mr. Geo. S. Lefevre said he should not have ventured to offer any remarks if he had not examined the evidence appended to the Report; and he was sure if those facts had been before them many of the gentlemen who had spoken yesterday and to-day would have modified their views, if they had not altered them altogether. On the whole, they must congratulate themselves on the unanimity of the committee; but that unanimity was on the verge of disagreement, and it was only by leaving out passages of difficulty, and by modifying others, that they came to an agreement. He thought it would

be impossible to institute any court of arbitration which should take into consideration anything but the smaller disputes between master and men. The disputes as to wages and time could only be settled directly between masters and men. He himself was of opinion that the law of supply and demand must regulate the amount of wages; he did not know anything else that would regulate them. The amount of wages was not the amount a man received in money, but what he could get for that money. In fact, any passing shower might make a difference in the rate of wages which a man received. Under these circumstances, in the absence of any other system to regulate the rate of wages, they must go back to the old law of supply and demand; and he confessed he saw no other means of regulating them. The feeling of the meeting appeared to be favourable to trades' societies, and he thought he might claim as a convert to that opinion Sir Archibald Alison. On the whole, he thought he might say that of late there was a considerable change in the feeling as to trades' societies—perhaps from the better modes of conducting them they had become more popular. The Report would, he thought, tend to prove that without combination men were unable to arrive at fair data for the settlement of their wages. It was necessary that there should be some minimum rate of wages, and a fixed time for working. Where there was a combination there was a bargaining between all the men united and individual masters, or the masters united. He confessed that he thought whatever operation trades' societies had in forming guilds or monopolies was a bad one. He belonged to the same trade as Mr. Hughes, which was a great monopoly, but he wished it was done away with. He hoped that they would now have nothing but freedom and fair competition in trade.

Mr. F. H. Hill rose to offer an explanation. He had been informed—for he was not in the room at the time—that exception had been taken to a passage in the Report of the Committee, connecting certain outrages which had taken place at Sheffield with the trades' societies of that place, on the ground that the leaders of trades' societies say there is no such connexion. Obviously, a mere general disclaimer of that kind was morally equivalent only to a plea of not guilty in a court of justice, and left the question still to be tried. The evidence on which the committee relied were the statements of a gentleman who for twenty or thirty years filled the office of superintendent of police at Sheffield,—convictions in courts of law, especially the conviction of John Drury, secretary of the Razor Grinders' Society, who, after trial at York Assizes, was sentenced to ten years' transportation for instigating two men of the name of Heathcote to the outrage known in Sheffield, and strong presumptive evidence of various kinds and degrees. These things did not affect the general question of trades' societies. As, however, a statement of the committee had been impugned, he thought it right to state the grounds on which it rests. At the same time, Mr. Hadfield's disclaimer was no doubt just, as regards the great

bulk of Sheffield artisans, and the majority of the unions, who, in deed as well as in word, did discountenance violence.

Mr. ALEXANDER CAMPBELL said that as one having had experience of trades' unions for nearly forty years, he could speak experimentally on the subject. When Sir Archibald Alison was speaking of the Glasgow cotton-spinners' trial he called out "No, no." Sir Archibald was the prosecutor; he was the defender of these men. They were called the thugs of society; the press was against them; public opinion declared them murderers; and it was in that state of affairs that the committee of cotton-spinners called upon him, and asked what he would advise them to do, in order to defend those men. His condition with them was, that if they could give him sufficient evidence that they were not guilty of the crime charged against them he would take up their case. He did so; and what was the result? After an unprecedented trial, which lasted he thought ten days, the verdict of the jury, by a majority of one, declared the five cotton-spinners to be only guilty of conspiring to raise wages, and they were unanimously declared to be innocent of all the charges of fire-raising and murder, and the other charges in that extraordinary indictment.

Sir ARCHIBALD ALISON said the cotton-spinners were found guilty of assault and violence; but not guilty of murder.

Mr. CAMPBELL, delegate of the flint glass makers, said he was extremely glad on this occasion to find that Sir Archibald admitted that the present state of society made it a necessity for trades' unions to exist. There was another point admitted, that the leaders of these societies were the chosen representatives of their trades, and that they were the most intelligent, the most sober, the most industrious of their class. These were important facts. Coming to the question as to whether trades' unions should be encouraged and promoted, he admitted that labour was treated as a commodity, but it was a living commodity. It was upon the principle of supply and demand that all trades' unions desired to act; for they must not allow skill and labour to go a begging to be allowed to toil. But they must combine to support each other, and to regulate the supply of their respective trades and professions. The same law regulated the liberty of entering into trades and professions by apprentices. Should it be the employers of capital, or the men in the trade who should regulate the number of apprentices coming into that trade? He believed there were some three or four hundred painters' apprentices in that town, who spoiled the work, but did it cheaper, and rendered men a drug in the market; when the unskilled men were put into the market, the skilled men were put out—because the unskilled would go cheaper than the skilled. In a paper read yesterday, a gentleman recommended that females should be employed as printers. Were there not in every profession and trade in this country more men than could find employment? In his own experience he remembered at Stockport a movement was made to supersede male labour by female labour,

because it was cheaper; but the effect was, for he had seen it himself, the husband remained at home to look after the children, while the wife went to work in the mill; and he had actually seen the men going with the women's dinners to the factories.

Mr. DUNNING would briefly remark on the two topics of Mr. Potter's address, which had been most the subjects of remark and difference of opinion—the arbitration of trade disputes, and the fact of labour being a saleable and purchaseable commodity. He agreed with that gentleman that labour was in every sense of the term a vendible commodity, and would show—as the representative of a trade society, the bookbinders of London—that upon this fact rested the defence of trades' unions. The fact of labour being a vendible commodity, indeed, was the most complete defence of trades' unions that could be adduced. It assumed, as a matter of course, that the workman had a right, as the free vendor of that commodity, to put himself as a bargainer for its sale on a position of equality with its purchaser, which, as his immediate necessities, when taken singly, were greater than those of his employer, he could only do by combination. To consider labour as a vendible commodity was therefore to justify the workman, as a free exchanger or vendor of it, in combining to rectify this inequality, which was inherent in his position as a bargainer for its sale. But there were other circumstances connected with labour, depending upon by whom and by what it was performed, which complicated the question, and which, if not carefully attended to, led to error. Labour, as a vendible commodity, supposed the vendor entirely free to dispose of it to whom he pleased, and at such a price as he could get, which was the position of a free workman. But there was the labour of a serf—the labour of a slave—the labour of a soldier, and that of a sailor; and, not to mention other agencies, also the labour of a steam-engine. All these laboured, but there was a great difference in their relative position as bearing on this question. A steam-engine could be destroyed, if the owner so willed it. A serf was not a free vendor of his labour, a slave still less so; indeed, he himself was a chattel or commodity, through his possessing the ability to labour. Neither were the soldier or the sailor, during the period of their service, free vendors of their labour. He was sure that Mr. Potter did not intend to confound these distinctions; still, unless they were carefully attended to, there was imminent danger of their being confounded. Employers, for want of due consideration, he hoped, rather than intention, had sometimes confounded them, and expected, as in the case of the stonemasons' strike at the building of the Houses of Parliament, the same obedience from their men as—he would not say from the serf or the slave—but certainly as from the soldier or the sailor. The employer in that strike candidly stated, in direct terms, that he did so. And there was at all times danger unless these distinctions were carefully noted, which was not always the case, of their being in a confused, indefinite haze mixed up with the idea of labour and workman. He mentioned these distinctions to show that

the consideration of labour *per se*, as a vendible commodity, was a very different thing to the several relations under which it existed, and the importance of attending to these distinctions. He would now refer to the subject of the arbitration of trade disputes. In his opinion nothing could be more advantageous; but there was a great difficulty stood in the way of this mode of settlement. The party in the dispute who believed itself to be the strongest was always averse to it. Like as in a fight: the losing party might be quite agreeable to a cessation, while the man who was winning, and his backers, were all for fighting it out. He made no distinction here; he believed that both employers and employed, if either considered themselves the strongest, would be equally unwilling to submit to arbitration, and give the most plausible reasons why it should not in their case take place. He thought, however, that an arbitration should take place, whether both were willing or not, if one of the parties desired it; such decision of course to be final. But here arose another difficulty: it was necessary that the arbitrators should be acquainted with the subject to be arbitrated upon, and strictly impartial. But as one of the parties, the strongest, did not desire anything impartial, and, if not impartial, these courts would do infinitely more harm than good, he feared, in this state of distrust and perplexity, it would be some time before they were established. Still, as, in his opinion, their principle was sound, endeavours should not be relaxed for their establishment. As he only intended to remark on these two subjects, he would not further occupy their attention.

Mr. E. Ashworth was glad of this opportunity of calling attention back to the subject which they were discussing—the policy or impolicy of trades' unions, which terminated frequently in strikes. The gentleman who spoke last but one (Mr. Campbell) represented the extreme section that would protect one trade against another. The differences of education and civilization all tended to the right regulation of labour; they tendered their services where they chose, and sold their abilities at the highest price, wherever they could get it. There seemed a tendency to believe that by some artificial means wages could be held at a higher than a natural value. Supply and demand must regulate the rate of wages; and in time of distress the employer could not raise wages—wages must go lower. Where were their trades' unions for that occasion? Why should he in Lancashire have raised the wages of his labourers without their having asked him for it? Simply because there was plenty of employment, and if he had not done so, they would have gone to another place for work. What had raised the wages of domestic servants from thirty to forty per cent.? Because the employment of women in mills took them away unless they received sufficient wages to induce them to remain. He most sincerely regretted that there was a disposition in society to set class against class—one section of society against another, as if the employer of labour was the enemy of the employed. He had seen that very much in his isolated village, the people of which came to him for advice

when they required it, and who were naturally near his heart. But these people were interfered with by trades' unions. If the trades' union said these people must turn out, they must turn out—there was no alternative. They said they were content with their wages, and did not wish to turn out; but they dare not disobey the order of the union. He had a great deal of knowledge of what took place at the Preston strike, where the men thought they were invincible. The unions first concentrated their efforts upon Stockport, and then went to Preston. They wanted to enforce the Blackburn prices on the Preston market. That contest cost the men half a million of money, which would have built sufficient new mills to increase the employment, and so to raise the rate of wages, by the natural process of supply and demand, to a higher figure than they sought to obtain by the strike.

Mr. DUNLOP said he had had a good deal of experience of combinations and strikes in that city (Glasgow), in connexion with the cotton trade. He had experience when violence was used to promote the objects of the Union; but happily those times had passed away. There was some difference of opinion as to recognising the unions of the workmen; but now they did recognise them. He considered them bad things; but if they did exist, and were well conducted, he did not see why they (the masters) should not meet them. He had had the honour of being chairman of the cotton-spinners of that city for many years, and when they had any questions of wages—for that was now the only question, as they had no question as to whom they employed—they endeavoured to have amicable arrangements with their men. When times were bad, the men submitted to a reduction of wages; but, as times improved, they had an advance. Of course the men knew very well whether trade was improving, or whether it was not improving; and they sent a deputation to ask an increase when trade was improving. He always represented to the men, "You and I are in the same boat; it cannot be for your interests that I should have no profit; if there is no profit, the mills cannot increase, and you will be thrown out of employment." He had always found the men disposed to listen to that argument; and he had known them put off a demand for six months, during fluctuating trade, to see whether the advance was likely to be permanent. They met him with great pleasure, and he was always glad to see them; but allow him to say, he did not think their unions did them any good. His impression was, that they would get just as much wages without a union as they did with it, and that the simple process of supply and demand would regulate their wages perfectly well. Let the men ask what they would, and let the master give what he could afford. But there were unions—what he would call bad unions—where they enforced questionable regulations, gave up their work if they did not get what they wanted, and compelled others to do the same. That system was very disastrous to trade.

Mr. JOHN H. COOPER thought that they, as representatives of the

working classes, might congratulate themselves on the Report on Trades' Unions. He was not going into the abstract principles that some gentlemen had been at great pains to illustrate, for he was speaking to the Report, and the question was the utility or non-utility of trades' unions. They had heard a good deal from Mr. Potter of the results which had followed to the working classes in consequence of trades' unions; allow him also to state a fact. He stood there as the representative of the letter-press printers of Scotland, a body of 1,400 or 1,500 men, with a bank account of upwards of £1000. For six years past not one man had sullied the roll of the poor, either directly or indirectly; they had never entered a criminal court; and if any were desirous of emigrating, the society had ample funds at its disposal, and it willingly disposed of them. In reference to a court of conciliation, would they allow him to point out how the end aimed at might be carried into effect without either Act of Parliament or arbitration? A collision occurred between the masters and the men; and the men offered, before they went out on strike, or before they attempted to strike, to leave the matter to arbitration. The employers refused to submit to arbitration, and would have nothing but their own terms. They (the men) proposed to plead their case before the judicial authority. A reference came up before Mr. Sheriff Bell, and they gained the case. He had shown that trades' unions were doing the work that all the regenerators of human kind wished done; and within the last ten years, his profession, as a body (he was not taking any isolated town, but the whole country), had increased in wages, in respectability, in moral power, and, above all, it had increased in that self-respect which alone could command the applause of others.

Mr. LINDSAY said, that having been for several years connected with trades' unions in Scotland, he would make a few remarks on some points which had not yet been referred to. The last speaker had alluded to the utility or uses of trades' unions. He found it was not an uncommon thing to say, that as soon as the working classes had become better educated, so soon to a certainty would the abuses connected with these societies cease. For his own part he must say, that so far as his experience of trades' societies went, there was, he thought, no institution in this country more valuable than they were. He believed that as an educational institution they would find them acting in the direction which would ultimately raise the working classes from their present position. The subject of non-society men had been spoken of as one of the abuses connected with trades' unions; he had seen a good deal of the working of this particular law, and he thought it one of the most objectionable and pernicious that could be employed in a trades' society. He had seen it carried so far, that a man had to take his son out of a mill; and he thought the rule alienated the men from the Union, instead of drawing them towards it. If trades' unions would consider their own objects, and would take the most advantageous course for themselves, the best thing they could do would be to abandon the rule as

to non-society men. Mr. Ashworth, when speaking of the objects of trades' unions, stated, that it was a delusion to suppose that trades' unions could keep up wages above the natural level of supply and demand. Working men did not hold any such opinion. These unions existed for the purpose of keeping wages at the level raised by supply and demand; and it was unfair to represent the working classes as being at variance with a rule which they knew as well as their masters. It had been represented to-day, that trades' unionists acted unreasonably in asking the same amount of wages for a man of indifferent abilities as for a man of good abilities; but that was not, after all, so directly, as was generally supposed, against the interests of the employer, for if wages were the expression of what the masters could afford to pay, it must be very clear, that if the workman sought a general scale of wages they would simply be paying the inferior workman for that which they might obtain a proficient workman to execute. He would urge very strongly the great importance of a good feeling being entertained between the masters and the men. He had frequently himself been on deputations, as a delegate, to make certain statements to the masters, and he could assure them that he had found very frequently that a strike was determined upon, not so much upon the merits of the question as upon the representations made to the workmen as to the manner in which the masters treated the men who were sent as delegates on their behalf. If there were fewer violations of the laws of courtesy on the part of the masters towards the men, they would hear of fewer strikes and less irritation. The question of arbitration had been spoken of, and it had been said, that no third party should be employed; but let the parties connected with the peculiar trades—the parties who were in a calmer mood—be the arbitrators to settle disputed points. And though there might be many abuses arising from a want of knowledge of political economy, it was as frequently on the part of the employers as on the workmen. If a board of arbitration existed, it would tend to promote good feeling, and to open up the way of friendship between one class and another; and if the masters received the deputations of the men with courtesy, they would hear of very few strikes.

Mr. LUDLOW said that looking back to the discussion on co-operation two days before, it might almost seem as if they were now putting the horse behind the cart, for assuredly co-operative establishments appeared to him to afford an outlook into an undeveloped future which was not afforded by trades' societies. When he first became interested in co-operation, he felt trades' societies, he must candidly confess, a hindrance, very much more than a help, in the way of co-operative establishments; and in consequence he had been led to a study of them to see whether they were really hindrances or not, and he could not help feeling that in the present day they were, if sometimes only a necessary evil, yet still a social necessity. He had to express his extreme gratification at the discussion which he had heard; and more especially at the most able paper and

speeches of Mr. Potter and the Messrs. Ashworth, who had presented the matter, from the employers' side, as well as it could possibly be presented. Yet if he were a leader of a trades' society he should wish nothing better than to take Mr. Potter's paper and circulate it as far as he could throughout the country. It furnished the most complete argument in their favour that could possibly be devised. He ventured to say, in spite of all the contempt that had been thrown upon such a view, that it was precisely that view of labour as a purchaseable commodity which was the real ground on which these trades' societies could stand. That purchaseable commodity differed from every other in this respect,—it was a purchaseable commodity with a will of its own. It wished to sell itself at a higher rate than the capitalist wished to give for it, and therefore it combined to do so. By the employers' own showing, they could not assimilate the labour, with that will to a commodity without it. Mr. Potter told them he favoured as much as possible the education of his work-people—did he educate his bales of cotton, to teach them how to fetch a higher price? Mr. Potter spoke of the mind or will of the capitalist; let him also accept the mind or will of the labourer, when it said that labour could sell itself at higher prices by combination than by dealing as units. Mr. Potter said he liked to see individual saving; but the combination of small sums of money to support members was exactly that which was done in friendly societies for sickness and burial; the obtaining by united, concerted action, that which it would be impossible by individual action to obtain. They never could convince ten men who had resolved not to take less than a certain amount that they were more likely to obtain that rate of wages if they did not act together. Day by day these combinations were becoming more and more powerful; and every unsuccessful strike had the effect of spreading them over a wider field.

The following conclusions were intended to be read by Mr. Ludlow, at the close of his observations :—

"1. I believe that all trade societies and employers' associations should be compelled to register their rules, and on their being certified not to be illegal, should obtain legal means of protecting their funds, recovering subscriptions, &c.

"2. I believe that, with the advance of economic knowledge, the ascertainment of the wages and conditions of work which may be reasonably demanded by the labourer at any given time and place becomes more and more a matter, not of mystery nor of guess work, but of practical science, capable of determination by competent persons.

"3. I believe, therefore, that disputes relating to such matters are capable of solution at the hands of mixed courts of employers and workmen.

"4. I believe that the legalization of trade societies and employers' associations would greatly faciiltate the working of such courts.

"5. I believe that such courts should act primarily by way of

arbitration, but that means could be devised for making their action (within certain limits) compulsory.

"6. I believe that strikes and lock-outs, or, in other words, private commercial wars, are a remnant of barbarism in the midst of civilization, and a disgrace to our social state; that the allowal of them is only justifiable so long as no competent tribunals exist for settling trade disputes; that such tribunals (towards which Mr. Mackinnon's bill would have supplied the first step) must ere long be devised; and that, when this takes place, the public will be entitled to insist on measures of penal legislation against strikes and lock-outs."

Mr. SAMUEL POPE said it appeared to him, that in this, as in all other discussions, a fact which was not without its significance, may be seen, that upon the two sides are almost entirely ranged the capitalist on the one side, and the labourer on the other. ("No, No.") Perhaps he might be taken to represent the general opinion that the public formed of the discussion. He could not agree with his friend Mr. Ashworth, that trades' unions were only successful and performed their proper functions when they terminated in strikes. They then saw trades' unions under their greatest disadvantages. A strike was the most disadvantageous circumstance under which a trades' union could appear; but the real and true way to judge of the utility of combinations is not the strikes they have occasioned, but the strikes which they have prevented, by causing wages to be raised. He was exceedingly delighted to hear from Mr. Lindsay that workmen were not such bad political economists as the gentlemen who employed them seemed to think. Trades' unions were held by their defenders not to regulate the permanent value of labour, but to prevent temporary depression. If it were right to call labour a commodity, it could not be right to call the interests of buyer and seller identical. The interests of all buyers and sellers were antagonistic; and it was right on the part of the working men to endeavour to put themselves in such a position that the seller may be on equal terms with the purchaser, notwithstanding the great advantage which capital has over labour: capital has no stomach, and can wait; the labourer must live, and cannot wait for his necessities. In any case, capital must have the advantage; and that advantage trades' societies endeavour to counterbalance, as their combination enables them to wait, in competition with the capitalist, until their terms are accepted. They were not now discussing the acts of trades' unions in particular instances, but were engaged in seeing whether there was not a sound principle in them. In regard to arbitration, he found the greatest opposition to courts of conciliation on the part of the masters. In the district of the potteries this principle of arbitration had been employed with the greatest success. A court of arbitration, composed half of employers and half of employed, adjust their differences in a way satisfactory to the working classes, and the difficulty was caused by the employers, who thought they had a right to employ their capital without reference to the workmen.

Mr. BAZLEY, M.P., had great doubts as to the utility of trades' unions in raising the wages of the men, though he was quite friendly to the deliberations which ought, and frequently did, occur between the employers and the employed, as in the instance of Mr. Dunlop; and on these occasions it was perfectly possible for both parties to agree to such terms as might be satisfactory. But he attributed the prosperity of this country not to the trades' unions at all—it was very questionable whether they had contributed to the advance of labour. If they referred to the fact that a century ago manufactures scarcely existed in this country, they would find that as they were called into existence, a new field of labour was opened up to those who were very imperfectly employed. But it had been intimated at that meeting that capital was assuming a position that was somewhat dangerous to the labour of the country; and that it did not give the labourer a fair equivalent for his labour; but if they looked at the increase of capital, they would find that just in proportion to the increase of capital, and co-existent with increasing labour, there had been an increase of wages. There was a great and increasing state of prosperity in this country, which was constantly demanding increase of labour; and he hoped that increase would continue, for then the labourer would be better paid. He could state, that on many occasions he had voluntarily increased the wages of the labour he employed, simply because there was an increasing demand for labour. There was an important fact which had been omitted in the consideration of this question: employers frequently lost good hands, who were tempted to leave them for better situations; but, remember, these men were not taken away from their masters because they were good workmen, but for the purpose of communicating information as to improvements which their employers might have introduced. A labourer frequently contributed to important inventions; but he very frequently took a comprehensive system of manufacture, and conveyed that system, for his own personal advantage, to some other establishment, while a rising competition was often likely to injure his previous employer. They ought also to remember, that in this country there was continually occurring what he might call lapsing industry—where a trade no longer existed in the place where it was formerly carried on. These changes were constantly taking place to a most injurious extent, as, for instance, in Coventry, where a change of fashion had stopped the demand for a particular kind of ribbon; and, unless there was a free agency on the part of capital, and also on the part of labour, they could not have the means of keeping up with the changes which continually took place. No trades' unions could possibly have the effect of keeping up the rate of wages in a branch of industry that was rapidly declining on account of the demand for the article becoming less. Essentially, the statements of Mr. Potter would, he thought, be found absolutely, practically, and economically correct in every point of view. Happily, strikes were now less frequent; and he believed that as the labouring classes and as

the employing classes became better informed, strikes would become still less frequent. There was that spirit of self-adjustment in commercial matters which would be more effective than any means of dictation that could be called into existence.

Mr. SCOTT, of Belfast, said he was surprised indeed that intelligent men should call in question the advisability of trades' unions or associated efforts of any kind. Why was it that the associated efforts of working men were now questioned, while those of other classes of the community were never for a moment called in question? He need not be told that strikes were an evil; that must be admitted, and by none more readily than by the working men. But they were rather an excrescence growing out of the ill-organized or imperfect union that existed among working men. It was said by a gentleman present, that in some departments of trade there was not a sufficient supply of hands to be got. He would like to know what amount of wages was paid. The present state of society was such, that there were more men in every department of labour than there was labour for, and men had consequently to go idle. To illustrate that principle: there were one hundred men to employ, and there were only ninety required by the employers. Now, if these one hundred men were scattered over the country, and there was no combination amongst them—the master offered a certain amount of wages—the man and his family were starving, or were likely to starve, if he did not get employment—and he was therefore driven to accept a less rate of wages than he would obtain if there were a combination. There were ten men who could not obtain employment—there being one hundred men and only ninety required—but if there were a union, the ten would be supported by the ninety until they got work; whereas if there were no union, and each case had been a mere bargain between the employer and the employed, they were obliged to accept the wages which were offered without reference to the capacity of the workmen.

Mr. MAUNDER said he came from the south, where trades' unions did not exist to the extent that they did here; and notwithstanding that, they got on very well without them: they did not stand still with regard to the rate of wages, but continued to advance it. He had heard many statements made since he came here, but many of them were unsupported either by fact or argument. In one paper it was stated that trades' unions had very much raised wages since 1846; but they should remember that since that time wages had been going up in every part of the country, and in order to establish that it was trades' unions which had raised the rate of wages, it would be necessary to show that wages had gone up more where they existed than where they did not. He did not think they could show that. He had known the trade of Bradford for many years, and that trade had been conducted without any unions; but the fact was, that wages were so satisfactory that people had come into Bradford from all the neighbouring district, and he believed that at the present time the wages of labour, particularly female labour, were higher there than

here (Glasgow). He did not say that was caused by trades' unions, but he begged most distinctly to state female labour in Scotland was paid at a much lower rate than in the south. To compel an employer to pay a uniform rate of wages was of course very unjust towards the best workmen; but the employer had also a right to complain inasmuch as it destroyed and prevented improvement in his workmen. We were in competition with all the world, and it was most important that the workmen should be the best that could possibly be got. Some gentlemen had intimated that the members of trades' unions did not overlook the great question of political economy as to supply and demand. That was true to a certain extent, but the very attempt to fix the wages was to assume an opinion rather than in any way to test the market as it ought to be tested. Another gentleman (Mr. Lloyd Jones) justified trades' unions on the ground that merchants in London having, for instance, large quantities of sugar, combined to keep up the market: that was quite right, if the trades' unions withdrew surplus labour when there was a temporary depression, there was no harm; but what he objected to was, that they adopted the arbitrary principle of stopping all labour. In the south there was an arrangement, when there was a temporary depression, that instead of lowering wages they should limit the hours of work, and he thought it was the best plan to adopt. (A voice: "That caused the London strike.") Allow him to explain the difference: he was speaking of the hours of labour being curtailed during the temporary depression of trade; in London, the attempt was to lower the rate of work permanently. The wages had increased where there were no trades' unions simply in this way—the demand was greater than the supply; if a person did not get sufficient remuneration he withdrew himself, and obtained employment elsewhere; and they had heard from Mr. Ashworth and Mr. Bazley, that they found it a necessity, because labour was in demand, to advance the wages of their men without being pressed to do it; and such must always be the consequence of supply and demand. He thought, therefore, that they were attributing too much to these trades' unions, and giving them credit for that which ought to be attributed to other causes.

Mr. P. H. Rathbone said, that being secretary of this committee, and having had perhaps as much to do with it as any one else, there were certain points which he did not wish to pass without recording his distinct opinion upon them. In the first place, in regard to piece and day work and machinery there was not much said in the Report; but it must not be supposed on that account that the arguments in favour of daywork in every trade were irrefragable. In different trades piece and day work had different effects; and where it was a machine that did the work, a fixed rate for piecework might be as unfair as in other trades a fixed rate for daywork. The next point he wished to direct their attention to was one on which he hoped they would excuse his speaking a few words to them. He had noticed, for almost the first time, a very dangerous tendency which seemed to be rising in these bodies, and he had found it perhaps

more in Glasgow than in any other town; it was the introduction of that most dangerous of all matters, party politics. (No, no.) He would give his authority:—they had constantly such discussions in the Trades' Council of this city, which was, he presumed, a fair representative, and a very admirable representative, of the trades' unions of that city.

A MEMBER.—I think the remarks of Mr. Rathbone can be easily explained.

Mr. RATHBONE.—However, I have seen reports of debates on the Reform Bill in that Council; and I do think I am not at all off the card when I say that party politics have been introduced into the Trades' Council.

A MEMBER.—Not into trades' societies.

Mr. RATHBONE.—I wish to express my earnest hope that such topics will not be introduced into societies which are not established for that purpose. He did not object to political societies among working men, but to the introduction of such questions into societies which were established for other purposes. In the first place, it introduces an element of discord, which, when there are already quite sufficient elements of discord in every society, will do a great deal of mischief to them. In the second place, there is one thing which in this country has been most remarkable—great political parties have always contained men of all ranks and all classes, and it would be a great curse if anything should happen that would divide parties horizontally, as it were, instead of perpendicularly. I now pass to another subject—a subject in which I am glad to see Glasgow is not involved—those most slanderous and disgraceful imputations against females that appear in the balance-sheets of Lancashire. I do not wish that this occasion should pass without expressing on my own part my utter abhorrence of everything that is so treacherous as the attempt to ruin the character of women; and I trust in the pluck of Lancashire brothers and fathers that these things shall not go on. There is only one point more on which I wish to express an opinion. I doubt whether much good will come from the Council of Conciliation Bill, for I believe that for arbitration to be effectual the arbitrators must be chosen there and then, as the dispute arises, and be men who have the confidence of both parties, instead of being chosen by any outward authority; and I believe no standing council can ever possess the confidence of heated and contending parties.

Mr. HUGHES, in reply, said he was more convinced than ever, that the point he took in opening was the best point to take. He said it was an unfair accusation to say that persons who believed as he did ignored the laws of political economy. He admitted the doctrine of supply and demand in its own place as much as any man; but he said when they came to the subject-matter of the living labour of the living man, they would find that rule only partially applicable. Other and higher laws had to be considered. He could not go into that argument now, as there was no time for it; there was flat

assertion on the one side, that the doctrine of supply and demand would hold, apply it never so rigorously to the subject-matter of living labour; and he flatly asserted that it would not. And he begged to say that his view was proving itself true more and more day by day, and that the very fact that they were to-day discussing this question, was another proof of its being so. Mr. Ashworth had defied him to distinguish between labour and other articles. He need not distinguish them, they would distinguish themselves; he said the living labour would distinguish itself by either helping or hindering its employer, and cotton goods could not help and could not hinder him. The importance of friendly feelings between masters and men had been dwelt on. Could there be friendly feeling between a master and a bale of goods? The attempt to apply the law of supply and demand to human labour, as rigorously as to cotton, coal, and mere commodities, had brought on in France the French revolution; in this country Luddite riots, chartists, and rick burning; and slavery in America. He was surprised at hearing Mr. Lefevre and others still maintaining that there could be no arbitration as to wages. Why, Mr. Dunlop had in that room given them a remarkable instance of the successful working of such an arbitration in his own trade, where he represented the masters, and the men sent a deputation to confer as to rate of wages. At least, that was all he, or he believed the committee, meant by arbitration.

The CHAIRMAN explained that the Report might be purchased by those gentlemen who wished to possess it; and that it only remained for him to ask the meeting whether they would agree to the motion for the reception of the Report.

The meeting unanimously resolved to receive the Report.

A vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Rathbone as secretary, who, in acknowledging the compliment, proposed a similar vote to the chairman, which having been passed and acknowledged, the section rose.

APPENDIX.

THE following address, lists of questions, and circular were printed and widely distributed by the Committee.

I.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE.

INAUGURATED BY LORD BROUGHAM, OCTOBER 12, 1857.

ONE of the conditions on which England holds her present power and position among nations is that of pre-eminence in the Industrial Arts, and her prosperity will always be proportionate to the prosperity, intelligence, and self-reliance of her working class.

Any question, therefore, seriously affecting the laws of production and the relations of labour and capital, must be of vital importance to every class of the community. Consequently no body or person investigating the facts of social science can safely overlook those extensive trades' organizations which exercise so powerful an influence over the industry of this country. Hitherto they have hardly received the attention which they deserve, except from those who have been too deeply interested in their operations, on one side or the other, to be altogether impartial judges.

Few comparatively know the extent and completeness of their machinery, the large sums which they have at their disposal, and their manifold objects, often attained with great efficiency.

Nothing, it is believed, has more hindered Trade Societies from being fairly judged by the general public, than that secrecy formerly rendered unavoidable by the mischievous action of the Combination Laws, and afterwards, in many cases, continued, either through habit, or in consequence of the mistrust engendered by those laws. Certain it is that some of the most influential of those bodies have come to the conclusion that they have everything to gain and nothing to lose by the fullest publicity.

At the Second Meeting of the Association at Liverpool, October, 1858, a Conference was held on the subject, in which several working men took part. Resolutions were passed, recommending the Council to appoint a Committee to inquire into this subject.

In accordance with this recommendation, at a Meeting of the Council, held Wednesday, 23rd February, 1859, Resolutions were unanimously carried, on the motion of Dr. Farr, appointing a Committee for the purpose of reporting to the Council of the Association, previous to its next meeting, upon the objects and constitution of Trades' Societies, with their effect upon wages and upon the industry and commerce of the country.

Such is the Inquiry upon which we are engaged: it is one which cannot be satisfactorily carried out without the co-operation of the working classes, and especially of the Trades' Societies; such co-operation, we are happy to say, has in many instances been already heartily given. We have only to add, if the inquiry should tend to promote a more cordial feeling between employer and employed, or to indicate some method of avoiding those almost periodical cessations from work called lock-outs and strikes, the Committee, for their part, will consider their labours amply justified and fully repaid.

The Inquiry will embrace, among other branches of the subject—

The moral effects of Trades' Societies.
The class of men belonging to them.
Their effect upon the rate of wages.
Their effect upon the character and skill of the workmen.
The relation of the apprenticeship system to Trades' Societies.
Masters' combinations and their effects.
The effects of combinations on the prosperity of special trades.
Strikes: their causes and effects.
Statistics of Trade Societies.

Any information, in the shape of facts, statistics, &c., or any documents, pamphlets, &c., bearing on the subject, will be most gratefully received; and may be addressed to either of the Secretaries, or any Member of the Committee.

8, WATERLOO PLACE, PALL-MALL, S.W.

II.

QUESTIONS FOR SECRETARIES, OFFICERS, OR MEMBERS OF TRADE SOCIETIES.

GENTLEMEN,

A COMMITTEE having been appointed by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION OF SOCIAL SCIENCE, for the purpose of reporting upon the objects and constitution of Trades' Societies, with their effects upon Wages and upon the Industry and Commerce of the country, the following Questions have been drawn up by them with a view of eliciting such information as is necessary for the purposes of the inquiry.

The Committee, in putting these questions to the Trades' Societies, wish it to be strictly understood that they are actuated by no wish to pry needlessly into the secrets of the Working Classes, nor by any spirit of unfairness either towards them or their Employers. They believe that the collection and diffusion of correct information upon this important subject will tend to promote a more cordial feeling between employers and employed, and may develop some method of avoiding those periodical cessations from labour called Strikes or Lock-outs. It is in this view that these questions are presented to you, and that questions of a similar nature have been drawn up for circulation among employers who are members of societies of masters or manufacturers.

We have only to add, that the questions have been drawn up after consultation with the representatives of one of the most influential Trade Societies. They should be considered mainly as indicating the sort of information which we are seeking for; and we should be far from wishing to press any, the answering of which, under the particular circumstances of your Society, might appear to you to be prejudicial to its interests.

1. What do you consider to be the principal objects and advantages of Trade Societies?

2. How many members are there in your Society? and what is your trade?

3. What are the terms of membership? (Where provided by printed Rules, refer to No. of Rule.)

4. Is your Society associated with others belonging to the same trade in other parts of the country? If so, to what extent is it associated, in what town is the central board or Society situated, and to what extent is the local Society bound by the decisions of the central authority?

5. Is the Society connected in any way with Societies of other trades in the same or other towns; and if so, how far does the connexion extend?

6. Do you consider that Trade Societies in any way tend to promote the efficiency or to develop the skill of workmen, to check inefficiency, and ensure work being thoroughly done in a workmanlike manner; if so, how?

7. Do you consider that they tend in any way to raise or maintain the moral character of the workmen; and if so, how?

8. Do you believe that the working man could secure a fair wage without the instrumentality of Trade Societies; and upon what grounds do you base your opinion?

9. Do you consider that they tend to develop a healthy public opinion amongst the members, or in any way serve as an education in the art of self-government?

10. Is there any rate of wages which is considered the lowest which any member is expected to accept; if so, what?

11. Is there any general custom, understanding, or law of the Society, which limits the hours of labour?

12. Does your Society insist on equal wages being paid to all members employed on the same work at the same shop?

13. What customs or laws are there with respect to workmen of one town seeking work in another town?

14. What, &c., with regard to workmen who are not members of the Society, but who may seek employment from the same master?

15. Are there any allowances to members upon tramp or seeking employment; and if so, what rules, customs, &c., are there with respect to such allowances?

16. Has the Society any means of ascertaining whether work is slack or brisk in different parts of the country?

17. Is the Trade Society connected with any Benefit Society?

18. If so, upon what tables are the allowances based, and under what conditions are they granted?

19. How are the funds of the Society collected?

20. What measures are taken for checking the accounts of the Society?

21. Have those measures always been sufficient to secure a proper and economical use of the funds of the Society?

22. Do you consider that a benefit society connected with the Trade Societies has any advantage over one not so connected; and if so, in what way?

23. How are the workmen in your trade paid—by the day or by the piece? and what is the present rate of wages?

24. Is there any general custom, understanding, or law, tending to discourage piecework; and why?

25. Or tending to control the work done by a man in a single day: either at day or piecework?

26. What general customs, understandings, or laws are there with regard to apprentices; and what is the usual term of apprenticeship requisite for admission to the Society?

27. Are there any general customs or laws, &c., tending to control the description of work in which apprentices may be employed, or the rate of wages which may be paid to them; or the number of apprentices which may be employed by one master in proportion to his journeymen, or otherwise?

28. Will you describe what course, if any, is taken by the Society, when there is a prospect of any alteration in the rate of wages?

29. Have you any communications on the subject with the Masters or Masters' Societies, or with other Trade Societies?

30. Can you give any instances in which a general advance of wages has taken place in your trade without the intervention of your Society?

31. Do any of the officers of the Society devote all their time to the management of its affairs?

32. If so, what salaries do they receive?

33. Would you object to furnish us with a balance-sheet, distinguishing benefit from other expenses?

34. What are the penalties for infringement of the laws of the Society? (Refer to Rules if you have any.)

35. Under what circumstances are members expelled the Trade Societies; and with whom does the power of expulsion rest?

36. Do you think there is any room for improvement in the management of Trade Societies generally; if so, what improvements would you suggest?

37. Are there any other points upon which you can give us information with regard to the working of Trade Societies?

38. Is there any combination of masters in your trade; and can you give us any information respecting them?

39. What is the usual term of apprenticeship in your trade?

DOCUMENTS TO BE OBTAINED.

* The printed or written constitution and bye-laws of any Trades' Societies or Employers' Society in your district, or of any association of Societies.

Annual and occasional reports of the same.

A copy of any customs or laws, not printed.

Any statements, advertisements, pamphlets, defences, or other papers published by either masters or workmen during, or relating to, a strike or lock-out, or relating to Trades' Societies or Employers' Associations.

Any newspaper giving reports or notices of trades' arbitrations, meetings, or any other events arising out of, or in any way connected with, Trades' Societies or Employers' Associations.

Any local pamphlets published upon the subject.

Any other local documents bearing upon the subject.

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* It will be desirable to have in all cases the constitution, &c., of each Society forming part of the Association, as well as of the Association itself.

III.

QUESTIONS TO BE SUBMITTED TO EMPLOYERS OF LABOUR.

1. In what business are you engaged, and where is it carried on?
2. About how many men do you usually employ?
3. In what manner are they paid, and what are the present rates of wages, distinguishing the different descriptions of labour, and whether it is paid by the piece or by day work?
4. About what proportion of your workmen are members of Trade Societies?
5. Are the workmen who chiefly belong to, or are most active in, Trade Societies, drawn from the more highly paid and skilled class of workmen, or from the unskilled and lower paid class?
6. Are all your workmen members of their respective Trades' Societies, or are there only portions of them Unionists, and are the Unionists generally the cleverer or less efficient workmen?

6A. Are the directors of Unions generally among the cleverer and more intelligent workmen of their trades or not?

7. Have you ever been interfered with, or attempted to be interfered with, by the Trade Societies, as to the wages you give your workmen; if so, give a sketch of the circumstances and result?
8. What is the character of those who are not Society men, as compared with those who are?
9. Have you ever found that the being obliged by Trade Societies, or otherwise, to pay a fixed rate of wages, necessitated your giving employment to the men who would do the most work, of whatever character, and prevented your giving the preference to steady sober men, but who were slow workers; if so, can you give any instances?
10. Have you ever been prevented giving one man higher wages on account of his greater value, because you would have been obliged to raise the wages of all those workmen employed upon the same description of work?
11. Have you ever found yourself fettered in employing men who did not belong to the Society?
12. Have you found any difficulty in introducing piecework? Has the Society in your trade any general understanding, custom, or law, tending to discourage it?
13. Have you ever found yourself prevented from introducing improved processes of manufacture by Trade Societies, or by your workmen?
14. Have your plans of business ever been interfered with in any way by Trade Societies; if so, in what way?
15. Have Trade Societies, in your opinion, any tendency to develop a healthy public opinion amongst the men?
16. In your opinion could the workmen secure a fair rise in wages when it was justly due and improperly withheld, without combination; and if so, how?

17. Is there any combination of employers in your trade?
18. Is there any system of apprenticeship in your trade; and if so, what is the system?
19. Have you ever been fettered with regard to the proportion of apprentices you employed as compared with regular journeymen, or as to the description of work the former may be employed upon; and if so, in what way?
20. What is your opinion concerning the general effect of apprenticeship, especially with regard to its relation towards Trade Societies?
21. What, in your opinion, has been the effect of Trade Societies upon wages?
22. Can you give any instances in which a general advance of wages has taken place in your trade, without the intervention of a Trade Society, or without a strike or threat of strike?
23. What, in your opinion, has been their effect upon the prosperity of your trade?
24. What, in your opinion, has been their effect upon the character of the workmen?
25. What benefits do you consider to have arisen from Trade Societies?
26. What evils, and if any, what remedies would you propose to apply? Can you give us any information concerning the laws, regulations, customs, and action of Trade Societies, or any facts respecting them, besides those already given?
27. Can you give us any information concerning the laws, customs, understandings, or action, of the employers' combination, if any exist, or any facts relating thereto?
28. What is the usual term of apprenticeship?

IV.

QUESTIONS RELATING TO STRIKES TO BE PROPOSED TO EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS AND TRADE SOCIETIES.

1. Have strikes or lock-outs been frequent in your trade during the last ten years?
2. How long is it since there was a strike in your trade; and when did the last strike or lock-out commence and terminate?
3. What were the causes of the strike or lock-out?
4. What was the state of trade at the commencement of the strike or lock-out; was it brisk or languishing? What was the rate of wages, distinguishing those of each department of labour?
5. What terms were proposed by the workmen or employers at the commencement of the strike or lock-out, whether as to wages or conditions of labour?
6. Were any terms of compromise offered and rejected by either employers or workmen during the continuance of the strike or lock-out; and if so, what were they?
7. What were the terms finally agreed upon?
8. How were the workmen on strike or lock-out supported, whether by their own Union alone, or did those of other trades contribute; and if so, to what extent?
9. Were the employers whose men were on strike or lock-out, supported by their own or any other employers' association, or by individual employers; and to what extent?
10. What were the allowances per diem made to those on strike or lock-out?
11. Were there any cases of intimidation during the strike or lock-out, or after its termination; either on the part of employers or men?
12. Were new men introduced in consequence of the strike or lock-out; and if so, was any effect produced thereby upon wages after the strike was concluded?
13. Did any workmen become employers in consequence of the strike or lock-out; and how have they succeeded?
14. If new men were introduced, did they belong to the same trades in other towns; or did they come in from any and what other trades?

15. Did many of the new men remain permanently in the trade after the conclusion of the strike or lock-out?
16. Were many of the men on strike permanently driven out of the trade by the new comers?
17. Were any employers' establishments permanently closed in consequence of the strike or lock-out?
18. What was the general conduct of the workmen and employers during the strike or lock-out?
19. Was there any introduction of new machinery in consequence of the strike or lock-out; if so, what?
20. Did the workmen strike, or the employers lock-out of their own accord, or were they directed to do so by any trade society or employers' association, or other associated body?
21. By whom was the strike or lock-out organized?
22. Was the machinery for distributing allowances, and other general affairs of the strike or lock-out, managed by any private committee, or any regularly established trades' society or employers' association?
23. Was the number of members of the trades' society or employers' association increased or diminished during or after the strike in consequence thereof?
24. Give your general opinion as to the causes and effects of the strike or lock-out, and whether there were any features peculiar to it.

V.

3, Waterloo Place, Pall Mall, S.W.,
London,

Sir,

There are few branches of Social Science of more importance than those which concern the laws of production, and the relations of capital to labour; especially at a time when manufacturers abroad are yearly entering into a closer competition with those at home.

When, therefore, the subject of Trade Societies was brought before the National Association at their annual meeting in October, 1858, they immediately recognised its importance, and a committee of inquiry was appointed, whose names will be found above.*

Some of these societies undertake the management of incomes which are reckoned by tens of thousands, and have branches in every important town throughout the United Kingdom, and in one case at least in several of our colonies. The machinery by which they test and enforce the opinion of the majority of their members is most complete.

It is impossible safely longer to ignore their existence, possessing as they do a power so thoroughly organized, and such extensive ramifications; and it is believed that a rigidly impartial inquiry into their nature, constitution, and the consequences of their action, cannot be without beneficial results. The officers of various societies have shown a willingness to give the Committee the information for which they have asked, as the following resolution, passed by the United Trades' Council of Glasgow, representing about thirty trades, will sufficiently prove:—

"Resolved,—That we, the representatives of Trades' Unions in Glasgow and the West of Scotland, in council assembled, hail with delight the proposal of an impartial inquiry into the nature and tendency of Trades' Unions, as proposed by the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science, and resolve to recommend to our constituencies to co-operate with the gentlemen who are engaged in that inquiry, by giving them information on this important subject. And be it therefore ordained, that reports from the various societies be given in to this council, with all convenient speed, of their willingness to co-operate in, or aversion to the inquiry, that the same may be forwarded to the proper parties."

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* See the commencement of the volume.

Other Trades' Societies throughout the country have shown equal readiness, which the Committee hope will eventually extend to all.

It appears extremely desirable that those who are employers should give the results of their experience with equal freedom, so that the report of the Committee may fairly represent all the facts relating to this difficult question.

The Committee are anxious that it should be understood that their only object is to conduct an impartial and scientific inquiry, and that they have no wish to interfere in any way between Employer and Employed, considering, as they do, that such interference would be quite beyond the proper province of the Association, nor should they have even thought it necessary to disclaim the intention, had not the fear of it been an objection actually raised to the working of this Committee. They enclose series of questions to which they would earnestly ask for replies. These questions are necessarily drawn up in the most general terms, and many of them are of course inapplicable to particular trades: there is also much valuable information which it is difficult to throw into the form of question and answer; and the Committee therefore hope that whenever you may consider that the questions are not so framed as to elicit all the information in your possession, you will not confine yourself to simple replies, but will communicate any circumstances or facts which can throw any light upon the subject. The following are perhaps the principal branches of the inquiry, viz.:—

The moral effects of Trades' Societies.
The class of men belonging to them and directing their operations.
Their effect upon the rate of wages.
Their effect upon the character and skill of the workmen.
The relation of the apprenticeship system to Trades' Societies.
Masters' combinations, and their effects.
The effect of combinations on the prosperity of special trades.
Strikes: their causes and effects.
Statistics of Trade Societies.

That the Committee fully realize the difficulty and extent of the question is proved by the fact that they are extending their inquiries over a space of two years, and that in their Report at Bradford they abstained from expressing any opinion upon the subject until they should have examined it in all its bearings. They are ready to spare no pains or trouble to make the information as full and complete as possible, but all their exertions will be comparatively useless unless they are cordially seconded by those who have information to give.

The next Meeting of the National Association will be at Glasgow; and combining as this city does, upon a large scale, all the characteristics of a manufacturing town and of a shipbuilding port, probably no better place could have been chosen for a satisfactory discussion of a Report of this kind.

If you can procure any printed documents relating to the subject we shall be greatly obliged; and we trust that, for the above reasons, we may fairly claim your kind assistance.

We are, Sir,
Yours obediently,
THOS. HUGHES,
P. H. RATHBONE.

ANALYSIS OF CONTENTS.

REPORT.

(vii—xxi.)

TRADE UNIONS—Information concerning, freely given, especially by operatives, vii; their objects and expedients, viii; their effects in accordance with political economy, so far as they equalize wages in the same trade, and secure a fair market rate of wages, viii, ix; necessary for this latter purpose? Yes, say all Trade Unions and some employers, x; their restraints upon employers, some legitimate, others not; every unnecessary restraint a suicidal policy to operatives, xi; their difficult duty to ascertain the market rate of wages, xi; their liability to convert a minimum into a uniform rate, xii; their conduct of strikes, not always unsuccessful; they prevent strikes, where the society is well organized, xii—xiv; connected with Benefit Societies, their advantages and disadvantages, xiv; their effect upon operatives as men, workmen, and members of society, xv; their treatment of non-society men, their responsibility for trade outrages, xvi; their Delegates, fair representatives of the working class, xvi; their general increase and improvement, xvii.

Conclusions of the Committee, xvii—xx; variance as to the practicability of Courts of Conciliation, xxi.

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE BOOT AND SHOE MAKERS' STRIKE IN 1857-8-9.

(1—9.)

1857—Closing Machines introduced; not resisted in London, otherwise in the Midland Counties, 1. *November*, Strike of Northamptonshire operatives (not combined) against shops using machine-made tops, ineffectual, 2. 1858—*April*, Northamptonshire Boot and Shoe Makers' Mutual Protection Society organized, 3; molestation of "scabs," 3; oppressive apprentice rules, the John Plummer controversy, 4. *October*, Strike against shops employing "scabs," 5; Kettering Branch secedes, 5. 1859—*February*, Twenty principal shops of Northampton adopt machinery, 5; General Strike, disapproved by other trades, 6; Northampton men start on tramp, but soon return, 6. *April*, Strike closes on an advance being given for machine-made tops, 7.

New Machinery—Masters *must* adopt it, 7; present misery of men entailed by it, how to be met? by private thrift or by Benefit Societies? 8; not by strikes, 8; duty of all operatives to denounce strikes against machinery, 9.

WEST YORKSHIRE COAL-STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF 1858.

(11—51.)

Operatives—General character of, 23, 24; as a trade, unskilled? 13, 21, 22, 33, 34; different kinds of, 13; paid by the piece, subject to deductions, 13; paid at long intervals, 24; bye-laws affecting, 31; mortality of, 14. *Employers*—"A colliery turns out a poor-house or a coach," 15; comparison of the cost of production with selling price, 15—17; discrepancy of statements by masters and men partly accounted for by the different scales of measurement, 16; have "corves grown as an oak-tree out of a sapling"? 16.

1854—1858—Miners not combined; Masters' Association, long established, secret, 20, 25, 26; Mining Association of Great Britain, 20; striking average of estimates by coal-proprietors, colliers, and a coal-dealer, prices had risen 62½ per cent., mens' wages only 30 per cent., 18, 19; the men limit the "get" to 4*s.* per diem, 21; the limit not an economic heresy, 21—25.

1858—Over-production, 25. *February*, Notice of reduction by masters of 15 per cent. on wages; on existing or enhanced wages? with or without explanation

to the men? 27; the reduction to be enforced by Lock-out, 26; the West Yorkshire Miners' Association organized; their rules regulating wages, 29; Strikes in detail, 29. *September*, Lock-out; no re-employment except at reduced terms and under a declaration of abandonment of Union, 30, 31; masters' Bye-laws, 31; masters' Circular, 32; men's Plain Statement, 35; the complaint of men's former refusal to work for stock, considered, 36, 37; repeated offers of arbitration made by men, refused by masters, 34; the Miners' Association of the United Kingdom established, 34; its rules, 35. *November*, Miners' Conference, 35; compromise, masters withdrawing all conditions, men accepting a reduction of 7½ per cent. on former wages, 37; soon getting rid of all reduction, 28; termination generally happy; men employed during strike are dismissed, why, 38; parallel Lock-out in South Yorkshire, 38.

Results—Cost to the men may pay itself in three years, 39; moral effects good, 40; delegates misrepresented, 41.—Further proceedings of the Associations; masters are forming a strike insurance fund, 41; the miners hold two conferences, circulate questions, and petition Parliament, 42; praiseworthy objects of the petition, 42; the Miners' Association of the United Kingdom replaced by the Amalgamated Union, 42. Local Societies and their rules, Adwalton and Drighlington, Lancashire and Cheshire, Barnsley, 43; the question of the limitation of the hours of labour, 45.

Summary, 46, 47; petition of miners to Parliament, 47, 48.

STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF THE BUILDING TRADES IN LONDON IN 1859-60.

(52—76).

Statistics of the building trade, 53; hours of labour and wages, 54.

THE STRIKE.

Cause—The nine hours' movement, 54—56.

History—1859, *July*, Strike resolved upon, 59; five firms selected by lot, 59; strike begins at Messrs. Trollope, 60; masters establish an Association, its rules, 65. *August*, Lock-out, condition of re-employment to make declaration renouncing the Union, 65; Anti-Strike committee amongst the men, a failure, 67. *September*, Messrs. Trollope's yard re-opened, but the Declaration enforced, 68. *November*, Strike abandoned for the nine hours' movement, maintained against the Declaration, and thereby legalized, 69. *December*, Lord St. Leonards' proposal to substitute for the Declaration an epitome of the laws concerning workmen, 69. 1860, *February*, The proposal accepted, 71, 72; the nine hours' movement postponed, 72.

Conduct—By the men, some occasional violence, 68.

Statistics—Number of men on strike, 67; amount of relief, 73; balance-sheet of conference, 73.

Effects—On families, 76; on the rate of mortality, 75.

PRINTERS' STRIKES AND TRADES' UNIONS SINCE JANUARY, 1845.

(77—92.)

National Typographical Association—Founded in 1847, 77; thrives for three years, 79, 80; then fails, why, 80, 81; its rules, 78—81.

Provincial Typographical Association—Founded in 1849, 81; its emigration scheme, 81, 82; cast in a suit for libel, 83; sixty-six strikes between 1849 and 1859, their causes analyzed, 83; rules not always enforced, 82; "farming" a paper prohibited, 84; type set up for one proprietor may not be used by another, 86; hours and wages, 84, 85.

London Trade—Society of Pressmen, 86; Society of Compositors, have prices settled by a conference, have an arbitration committee with a barrister as chairman, 86; hours and wages, 87.

Scottish Typographical Association, 87; wages, 87.

Irish Societies—Local only, 87; Dublin Society, emigration fund, and rules 87, 88.

Appendix—The statistics of the trade in the towns of the United Kingdom, 91.

THE LONDON CONSOLIDATED SOCIETY OF BOOKBINDERS.

(93—104.)

Rise and Growth of the Society—1780, the convivial "Friends," 98; 1785, the "Brothers," and the "City Brothers," 98; 1787, one Society, three lodges, 97; 1794, four lodges, 98; 1820, five lodges, and accounts printed, 99; 1828, articles printed, 99; 1829, Bookbinders' Pension Society established, 99; 1837, Asylum Society established, 99; 1840, the five lodges consolidated, 100; 1848, secession of the would-be convivial "Forwarders" and "Finishers," and their eventual combination with some members expelled for unretracted libels into the society of the "Day-workers," 103; the Consolidated Society and the "Day-workers" now friendly, though distinct, 104; present condition of bookbinders, 104; advantages of the Society, 104.

Transactions of the Society—In 1780, the hours of labour twelve and a half daily, 93; 1786, strike for a reduction of one hour, 94; masters lock-out, and are supported by booksellers, 94, 95; prosecution of the men for conspiracy; four, rather than return to work, prefer imprisonment for two years, 96; the anniversary of the martyrs kept till 1827, 97, 98; the King is the first to grant the hour, 97; the masters follow, 97; 1794, a second hour reduced by agreement with a partial combination of masters, 97, 98; 1806, strike for a further reduction of half an hour, a failure, 98; the half hour afterwards gained, 98; 1811, prosecution of masters for employing irregular apprentices, 98; 1826, strike against reduction of wages by the Christian Knowledge Society, successful, 99; 1832, strike against British and Foreign Bible Society, 99; 1839, dispute about apprentices, 99; employers lock-out, and threaten prosecutions: booksellers side with masters, small employers with men, 100; compromise, 100; 1842, 1849, disputes with British and Foreign Bible Society about wages, strike of unfairly treated women, 101; dispute settled by *controversy*, 101; 1850, Bookbinders' Circular established, 103.

STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT OF THE FLINT GLASS MAKERS IN 1858-59.

(105—114.)

1858, *November*, Strike in two factories, about apprentices and uniform rate of wages, 106; other masters co-operate with those struck against, 107; strikes in detail against all those co-operating, 107; Masters' Association established, its rules, 108; Lock-out throughout the United Kingdom; declaration of renouncing the Union to be the condition of re-employment, 109; Co-operative Company projected by men, 110. 1859, *January*, Men offer a compromise; terms, rules to be qualified, declaration to be withdrawn, 110. *April*, Compromise accepted, lock-out closes, 113; cost of strike, how defrayed, 113.

TRADES' SOCIETIES' RULES.

(114—147.)

Unions either purely Trade Societies or Trade and Benefit Societies, 114; either purely local or organized into branches, 115. *Rules:* of Masons, 116; Bricklayers, 117; House Carpenters, 117; Coachmakers, 118; Engineers, 119; Smiths, 119; Steam-Engine Makers, 121; Glass Makers, 121; Machine Printers, 122; Plasterers, 122; Bookbinders, 123; Coopers, 123; Printers, 124, 125; Seamen, 125—127; Lancashire Weavers, 128; Chain Makers, 129; Nottingham Lace Makers, 130; Sheffield Saw Makers, 131; Railway Spring Makers, 131; Coventry Factory Weavers, 132; Morocco Leather Finishers of London, 132. *Liverpool*—Upholsterers, 132; Plumbers, 133; Painters, 137; Tailors, 137; Plasterers, 138. *Glasgow*—Tin Plate Workers, 133; Potters, 134; Cloth Lappers, 134; Coopers, 134; Bakers, 134; Joiners, 135; Slaters, 136; English Potters, 135. *Miners*—Lancashire, 138; Adwalton and Drighlington, 139; Barnsley, 140.

Appendices—Tables showing contributions, allowances, and other particulars of fifty-nine societies, 141—145.

STRIKE OF CHAIN MAKERS IN THE MIDLAND COUNTIES, IN 1859-60.

(147—168.)

Chain Makers in the North—A thriving trade, 147; their Journal, its value, 148; their deputation to the South in 1859, 149.

Chain Makers in Midland Counties—Their hard condition, employment of women, long hours, spurious chain, 149; occupation and wages, 152. *History of the Trade*—1844, Wages low, Union established, Strikes in detail, Truck put down, wages raised, 153; Union then falls off and wages sink, 153. 1858, General dissatisfaction, 153. 1859, Strikes against tax for bellows cutting, and tax for carriage of iron, 151, 152. *The general Strike of* 1859—*July*, Resolution of a general meeting for a rise to the 5*s*. list, 154; notice given on behalf of the men by the Secretary to the Union, 154; general strike, 154; the notice disputed, and men summoned, 154; the sentence of the magistrates reviewed by the Court of Queen's Bench, 155. *August*, Masters offer a 5*s*. list of their own, 155: dispute as to the amount of existing wages, 155. *September*, Masters accept the 5*s*. list unconditionally, two firms only require a fresh notice, the strike closes, 156; conduct of the strike, party-feeling, bellows cutting, incendiarism, 156; cost of strike, 157; justification of strike, 158.

Appendices—Answers by a Chain Making Firm, 161; the "Chain Makers' Journal," 163—168; rules of Chain Makers' Anti-Truck Society, 168.

LOCK-OUT OF ENGINEERS IN 1851-2.

(169—205.)

Amalgamated Society of Engineers—Founded 1850, 171; pledged against piecework and overtime, 171, 192; its rapid rise, 171; conducts strike in 1851, 170—187; survives it, and thrives, 187; has Colonial Branches, 186; circulars of, 172, 178, 188, 199; finances of, 171, 186—188, 195. Customs of; pickets, 196; collecting trade statistics, 194; no intimidation, 188. Rules of, as to apprentices, 193; piecework and overtime, 193, 194; secrets, 193; No rules as to uniform wages, 178; against machinery, 188; against non-unionists, 188: Protest of, against strike of cotton-spinners, 203.

Strike and Lock-out in 1851-52:

Causes—*a*. Grievances of piecework and overtime, pushed on by the country delegates, whilst the Council holds back, 171; decreed to be abolished by majority of 9000 votes to 16, 172. *b*. A contemporaneous strike at Oldham, to displace labourers from mechanics' work, 175; discountenanced by Union, 175, 176; misrepresentations that the Union encouraged it, by "Amicus," 178; by masters, 178, 192.

History—1851, *Nov*. 24, Two notices insisting on no piecework, no systematic overtime, double payment of exceptional overtime, and definition of overtime, 172, 173. *Dec*. 24, Masters' Association formed, and lock-out resolved upon, 181; offer of arbitration rejected by masters, 182. 1852, *January* 1*st*, strike, 182; 10*th*, Lock-out, 182; arbitration again rejected by masters, 184; 24*th*, Declaration of abandonment of Union published as the condition of re-employment, 184; men start private work-shops, but fail, 184. *February*, Masters open shops, but insist on the Declaration, 184. *March* 30, All compromise rejected by masters. 1850, *April*, Men succumb, 186; most take the Declaration falsely, others emigrate, and found colonial branches, 186; Society survives the lock-out, and flourishes, 187.

Conduct—By men, openly, 182; without intimidation, 184; with constant offers of arbitration, 182, 184, 185; liberally to non-society men and labourers, 184. By masters, silently, 182; uncompromisingly, 182, 184, 185; in a few cases unjustifiably, 183.

Support—By private subscriptions, 183.

Cost, 186.

STRIKE AND LOCK-OUT IN THE COTTON TRADE AT PRESTON IN 1853.

(207—263.)

Preston—The first halting-place for the immigrant stream of labour from the fields to the factories, 207; its trade disputes have always been imported from elsewhere, and ended disastrously to the operatives, 208. 1836, Bolton Strike infects Preston, 209; its failure at Preston, 209.

1847—Wages reduced 10 per cent., 209. 1853, Stockport recovers the 10 per cent., 211. *August*, Agitation in Preston; all mills but four give the advance; strike at the four, 213; rash language of delegates; strike at one firm, men neither reasoning nor being reasoned with, 213; masters not *driven* to combine, were combined before, 214. *September* 15*th*, Masters' manifesto, resolution to lock-out in support of the four firms, 214; magistrates forbid public demonstration, 215; prosecutions for intimidation, commenced, abandoned, 216; masters refuse to see Union Committees or to attend public meeting, 217. *October* 15*th*, Lock-out of 18,000 men, 217. *November* 4*th*, Masters resolve to withdraw the 10 per cent. whenever works re-open; their charges against the delegates, 218; men, with a view of conciliation, memorialize the Mayor, the Home Secretary; both in vain, 219; 16*th*, Outrages on the masters at Blackburn, 219; female delegates, 219; police forbid sale of songs in the street, 220; support of the men by the amalgamated trades of London, 220. *December* 1*st*, masters offer to receive applications for work at wages without the 10 per cent., 220; no response, but would-be applicants have to be bought off; horrible straits of operatives for food, 220; the Poor-Law Inspector would set the operatives to *dig*, 222. 27*th*, masters' address explaining the strike, 222; mens' counter-address, 224; the manufacturers of the Manchester market decree a weekly levy of 5 per cent. on wages in support of the Preston masters, 227. 1854, *January*, London Society of Arts offers mediation, is disregarded by masters, 229; one master compromises with his men, 230; 24*th*, Delegates' manifesto, showing prices are lower at Preston than elsewhere, 231; 28*th*, Men will send no more deputations, but look to emigration, 232. *February*, 9*th*, Mills re-opened, wages without the advance, 2,500 men resume work, 233; the poor-house closed to the rest, 233; 23*rd*, Masters import low Irish, 235; consequent petition to Parliament by Preston householders for exemption from the poor-law, 237. *March* 2*nd*, The Mayor reads the Riot Act; his manifesto, its mis-statements, 237, 238; pacific proclamation of operatives, 238; monster Sunday meeting of Preston sufferers and Bolton supporters half-way between the two towns, 239; masters coerce a dissentient master, 240; 18*th*, Delegates suddenly arrested for molestation, 240; extraordinary efforts of operatives' committee to keep the peace, 241; the masters hurry on the trial, but the Judge postpones it, 243; the defence fund; a common labourer walks into Preston and lays down a sovereign, 243; the masters adjourn for three months, the men for six, 243. *April*, Mediation Committee of the town present the compromise offered by the men; mediation declined by masters, 244—247; Stockport loses the 10 per cent., and strikes to recover it, 247; Preston men succumb; George Cowell's farewell speech, 248, 249.

The Balance-Sheets, 249—263; receipts correct; disbursements fair, but secret service money (£692) disingenuously mis-stated, 251, 259; expense of agitation 11½ per cent.; leaders honest, but self-indulgent, 251; levies enforced by addresses, threatening, scandalous, and poetical, 253; analysis of total income during the strike, 260—263; of total expenditure, 263.

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS.

(265—338.)

General Remarks, 265—273.

Glasgow, 273—296; Council of United Trades, 273; Coopers, 274; Cloth Lappers, 276; Tailors, their efforts against Sweaters and Pitshops, 278; Potters; their grievances, ill ventilation, ill education, good-fr m-oven system, apprentices, 280—283; Masons, 284, 286; Carpenters; their numerous strikes; a Masters' As-

sociation, its rules, 286—289; Printers; strike to sustain wages for a year; their dispute with gilders, 290—295; Bakers, 295.—*Liverpool*, 296—300; Joiners, 296; Painters, 297; Ship-Joiners, 298; Tailors, a Union not self-supporting, and open to masters, 299.—MINERS, 300—315; *Staffordshire*, delegates a selfish class, 301; the Mining Inspection Bill, 302; co-operative stores, 302; employment of women, 302; the butty system, 303. *Cheshire and Lancashire*, Miners differ in different districts, 304; delegates improved, 304; masters fair and unfair, 304; the "get" limited, 305. *Scottish*, the necessity of combination shown by the history of the trade? 307; picketing of pits, 308; weighing system, 309, 310; truck, 311, 312; Govan Colliery Free Labour Society, 312; the character of delegates and masters disputed, 313, 314.—*Bootmakers*, crisis of the trade, 320; the London Masters' Association does not reduce wages, but employs no unionist, 320; strike at Blackburn against machinery, 321—324. *Coventry Weavers*, the out-door weavers compete with manufacturers, and support the factory operatives in strikes to establish a piecework system: unionists and non-unionists strike together, 324—328. *Coventry Watchmakers*, trade depressed, no price list; spurious manufacture; truck, 329. *Coachmakers*, 330. *Masons in the North*, National Association of Masters organized into districts, 331; the West Riding Association of Masters has its black list of operatives, 333; Trade Unions, comparison of Halifax rules accepted by masters, and Huddersfield rules rejected, 335. 1860, Strike for a reduction of hours, the men's communications unsigned, 336, 337.

LEGISLATION RELATING TO COMBINATIONS.

(339—350.)

Ancient laws *against* the labourer; "the good statutes" fixing the maximum of wages, 339, 340; combination prohibited first to builders, in 1549 to all trades, 341. Statutes in the reign of Elizabeth and James *for* the labourer; statute of apprentices; number of apprentices limited, hirings to be for not less than a year; justices of the peace to fix wages at the Easter quarter sessions; penalties on masters giving, or men taking, higher than legal wages, and on men refusing to work at the legal rate, 342, 343. The statute falls obsolete, but strikes necessarily illegal, 343. Change of trade in the nineteenth century; no longer masters and a few permanent workmen, but capitalists with a number of hands engaged at short hirings. Strikes frequent, 344. Statutes prohibiting combination for particular trades, in 1800 for all trades, 345. 1824, Statute repealing Combination Laws, but imposing penalties on intimidation, 347. 1825, This statute repealed by another in the same spirit, 348—350.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORT ON THE PROPOSED REPEAL OF THE COMBINATION, LAWS. 1824.

(351—372.)

Engineers and Machine Makers—How the masters rid themselves of the uniform wage system, 351, 352. LONDON TRADES—*Tailors*, "Flints" and "Dungs", 353. *Printers*, On good terms with employers, 353. *Hatters*, Number of apprentices absolutely fixed; "fair" shops and "foul" shops, 353, 354. *Bootmakers*, Abuse by masters of Combination Laws, 354. *Carpenters*, 355. *Glasgow Cotton-Weavers*, Appeal by men to ancient statutes for limiting apprentices and fixing wages, opposed by masters, ordered by the Court of Session to go to the Judges of Quarter Sessions; their decree fixing wages, at last given, but only declaratory; strike in consequence, its peaceable character, its failure, 356. *Glasgow Cotton-Spinners*, Their outrages, vitriol-throwing, woman-beating, attempts at assassination, 357. *Lancashire Weavers*, Men induced by their masters to meet, yet prosecuted under the Combination Laws, 358, 359. *Leeds Cloth-Workers*, 359. *Knaresborough Linen-Weavers*, 360. *Macclesfield Silk-Workers*, Cavalry improperly called in, 361. *Liverpool Sawyers*, Outrages, 361, 362. *Stocking-Makers, of Leicester*, 1819, Successful strike supported by public subscriptions, 362; 1822 and 1823, Instigation by some masters of a strike against others, 362; *of Howick*, Masters are prosecuted under Combination Laws; men likewise, both to

no purpose, 368. *Birmingham Trades*, Masters' combination impossible, as every operative can be a manufacturer; strong union of men in the button trade, 363, 364. *Irish Woollen Manufacturers*, How to return to work during a strike, all desiring, none daring? the Churchwardens' advice, "Devil take the hindmost," 365. Ingenious device of a panic by a master, 366. DUBLIN TRADES—*Carpenters*, Outrages, 367—369. *Coachmakers*, Outrage, 369. *Cabinet-Makers*, Masters bail off men prosecuted under Combination Laws; send the bills of their men to be taxed by the Union, 370. *Calico Printers*, 370. *Saddlers*, Prosecutions of both masters and men under Combination Laws, 371; lock-out by regular masters of men who proposed to work for an irregular one, 371. *Shipwrights, Tailors, and Silk Weavers*, Wages fixed by magistrates in vain, 371, 372. Whipping, a legal punishment for combination, 372.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORT ON THE EFFECT OF THE REPEAL OF THE COMBINATION LAWS. 1825.

(373—384.)

Newcastle Collieries, Limitation of the vend, 373, 374. *Coopers*, 374—376. *Paper Makers*, 376. *Wakefield Cloth Trade*, 377. *Seamen*, Their "Admiral-President"; their rules, a dialogue between Tom and Harry; their strict regulations as to mode of work, 378, 379. *Yorkshire Weavers*, No master can carry on trade with non-unionists alone, 380, 381. *Rochdale Flannel Weavers*, The masters subscribe to strikes; work by candle-light prohibited by the Union, at the suggestion of a master, when the market was overstocked, 382. *Scotch Collieries*, Absence of intimidation; apprentice fees from "neutral" men; men secure rise of wages, not by striking, but by continuing to work, and thwarting their masters, 382, 383. *Scotch Weavers*, 383. *Scotch Calico Printers*, 383. *Glasgow Cotton-Spinners*, Their outrages; their oath to "chastise knobs, to assassinate oppressive and tyrannical masters, to demolish incorrigible shops," 383, 384.

PARLIAMENTARY REPORTS ON COMBINATIONS. 1838.

(387—431.)

Summary 387, 388.

Cotton-Spinners. A reduced scale of wages the consequence of the use of more powerful machinery, 389—391; failures of general Strikes only encourage men to enlarge their Unions, 392; the overstock of the trade, a necessary evil, 392; the Factory Act impossible to be observed, a Ten Hours' Bill needed, 392, 393.

Manchester Cotton-Spinners, Their Union, 393. 1829, Large Machines introduced, 393. *March*, Masters give short notice of Reduction, 394; Strike of the Fine Spinners, they are for four months supported by the Coarse Spinners, 394. *September*, Lock-out of the Coarse Spinners for supporting them, 394; after six weeks more, the men succumb, 394; the leaders, their devices to avoid and to conclude the strike, 394; conduct of the Strike, 395.

Glasgow Cotton-Spinners—Masters' Secret Association, 396; Rules of Union, 397. 1836, Men gain an advance. 1837, Masters give short notice of withdrawing the advance, the "men have no resource but to strike on the moment," 398, 399; after a fortnight the men offer to accept the reduction, but masters now dictate their own terms, viz. much heavier reductions, and a new scale of payment according to the size of the machinery, 400; after four months the men yield, 399. Cost of Strike, 400. Violence during Strike, delegates arrested, their defence, 401, 402.

Belfast Cotton-Spinners—No combination and lower wages, 402.

Belfast Calico Printers—Strike about apprentices; establishment closed, 408.

Irish Printers—Their Union; conditions of employment, 404, 405. No general Strikes, and generally no violence, 405, 409; particular strikes, about apprentices, 405; about non-unionists, 408. A master secretly trains boys of the free school, 409. Wages uniform, but fair, 407.

Dublin Building Trades—"Regular" and "Irregular" Employers, 410. "Irregular" Employers use cheap labour and live by making the lowest tenders for coarse public work, 410, 411; they alone complain, 412. Complaints: Piecework, 411, uniform wage, 412; apprentices, 413. Violence, murderous and

organized, 414—416; depression of trade, not to be attributed to the Union, 417. *Carpenters*—Two Societies besides colts, 418; their rules objected to in detail by regular masters, 419—423. *Bricklayers*—Two Societies, 424. *Sawyers*, 424. *Plasterers*, 425. *Painters*, formerly two Societies, 426. Real rules and pretended rules, 426.

Shipbuilders, Advantages of Dublin for shipbuilding, 429; but the trade all but extinct, 429; the alleged causes, limits to apprenticeship and exorbitant uniform wage, 429, 430. *Canal Trade*, Masters dare not dismiss their men. Complete system of intimidation, 431.

WEAVERS' STRIKE AT PADIHAM, MARCH—OCTOBER, 1859.

(433—472.)

Blackburn prices, agreed upon by the two Associations of masters and men, form the standard prices for the East Lancashire district, 433, 434; prices cannot be ascertained without a complicated calculation founded on an inspection of the looms, 434. At Padiham two co-operative concerns had failed, 436; in 1858 the East Lancashire Amalgamated Power-Loom Weavers' Association formed, 436; its rules, 437, 438. *March*, 1859, Padiham prices 12½ per cent. below Blackburn prices; men apply for an equalization, and, being refused, give notice, 439; the masters call a meeting, and invite operatives, but cannot get a fair hearing, 440; offer by the masters of prices which they say are within 2½ per cent. of Blackburn prices; was the difference justified by the local disadvantages of Padiham? 440; the offer made too late, yet improperly refused by the men, 441; 17*th*, strike. *June*, The masters of East Lancashire unite into a Defence Association, and support the Padiham masters, 448; circular and letters of the Association, 444—448, answered by the Secretary to the Union, 448, 449. *Difficulties in the settlement of the Strike*, First, inspection of the looms, necessary, 442; but refused by the masters to the Secretary of the Union, unjustifiably, 442, 471; allowed by one master, who thereby was enabled to resume work, 456; why did neither party, till after six months, propose an inspection by disinterested persons? 442. Second, the Unions: the men would only deal through their executive, which executive the masters were bound by their rules, though not under penalties, not to recognise, 445, 447; both parties obstinate, 453—455; but for the masters there is some justification, 471. Third, minor disputes; picking healds, 452; charge for gold bobbins, 451—453; irregularity of the size of the emery beams, 450; unfriendly relations between masters and men, 436, 439, 453.—The Committee of Conciliation of five tradesmen of the town, 453, meet with suspicion, 454, 456, and do not succeed. One employer settles with his men, who find his prices are the Blackburn prices, 451. *August*, The Blackburn masters intervene, inspect the Padiham looms, and report that the offer of the Padiham masters, which professed to be 2½ less than Blackburn prices, was really equal to them, 458—461. *September*, The Padiham operatives object to the report, 461, are allowed to verify it, 462; eventually are compelled to submit by Blackburn and other contributors to the Union, 462, 463. *October*, Work resumed, 464.

Statistics of Strike, 443; Balance-sheet, 464, 465; the cost of collecting and distributing funds, 19 per cent., 466; delegates were paid too highly, and prolonged the dispute, 466, 467; the reasons why the operatives let themselves be misled, 468, 469. *Intimidation*, 472: by picketing mills, 447, 456; by threats of scandal, 447, 457.

Trade Unions—The larger, the less dangerous, 469; useful and necessary to enforce the law of supply and demand, 470; should not seek uniformity of prices, 469, 470; should remember that strikes jeopardize the whole trade, 470.

SPINNERS' STRIKE AT ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE IN 1830.

(473—478.)

1830, Strike to secure 4*s.* 2*d.* per 1000 hanks of No. 40; offer by masters of 3*s.* 9*d.*, or average prices of district, in proportion to the number of spindles,

refusal by men, 474; the men supported by "the National Association" and the Glasgow Spinners, 475, 476; their claims urged by "The Voice of the People," 479. The men submit, 475. Murderous outrages, 476, 477. Conclusions, 477.

SHIPWRIGHTS.

LIVERPOOL SHIPWRIGHTS.

Associations in this Trade ancient, both of masters and men, 479; formerly Liverpool Shipbuilding more important relatively than now, 480; the Union, though nominally only a benefit society, most powerful; resisted the press-gang, carried elections, dictated to masters, defied the police, 480, 481. 1817, Piecework prohibited, 481; a shipbuilder offending against the rule, half ruined, and compelled by his creditors to apologize to the trade, 481; outrages against non-unionists, 482. 1823, Master Shipwrights reorganize their Association, 482; protect non-unionist sawyers, 482; resolve to employ no men who work in "pitchpot" yards, 483. 1824, *Formal correspondence between the Associations of masters and men*, Complaints of masters against rules and practices, limiting the amount of a day's work, 484; requiring ten men to load blocks, 484; against non-unionists, 484; against the proper discharge of men, 485; controlling the selection of foremen, 485. The shipwrights answer seriatim, 485—488; complain of payment in public-houses, 488; and of the lax practice as to apprentices, 488; ask for notice before change of wages, 487; and for recognition of overtime, 488. Masters reply seriatim, 488—490; repudiate any intention to take contract work, 489.—Men refuse to work for a new firm without leave of the Masters' Association, 491. 1825, Shipowners applied to, by shipwrights for an advance of wages from 4*s.* 6*d.* to 5*s.*, by masters to pay wages for repairs, 491; wages rise to 5*s.*, 492. 1826, Strike upon a proposed reduction of wages to 4*s.*, 492; masters resolve to employ no unionist, 492; soldiers called in to prevent violence, 493; compromise for 4*s.* 6*d.* per diem, 493. 1834, Apprentices jointly prosecuted by masters, 494. 1836, Trade Unions broken up by masters insisting on a declaration, 494. 1839, Wages rise to 5*s.*, 495; riots about non-unionists; some shipwrights committed, 495. 1844, The existing Union established, 495; machine-punched copper objected to, 496. 1844-50, The chief trouble the refusal of Liverpool shipwrights to work with those who have served their apprenticeship elsewhere, 496, 497. 1846, For this latter class National Shipwrights' Friendly Society established, 496. 1848, Foremen's Club formed, 497. 1850, Committee appointed by the Town Council to examine into the trade, 497. 1852, The "sheet-rules," as revised by a sub-committee of masters and men, 498—500. 1853, Apprentices' Association formed, 500. 1857, United Kingdom Amalgamated Society of Shipwrights formed to comprise all shipwrights; their rules, 500—502; the Liverpool Club secedes, 502. 1860, Present state of the trade; evidence of men; evidence of masters, that Society to a small extent resists machinery, has kept up wages, is beneficial, 504. Statistics of the trade from 1820 to 1860, 505.

SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE TYNE.

(505—511.)

Evidence before the Parliamentary Committee of 1825—South Shields, 1823, Strike for dismissal of men for insufficient work, 506. 1824, Lock-out of unionists on dispute about apprentices; compromise, 506; Rules of masters to lock-out in case of dispute, and not to employ a dismissed man, 506; all shipwrights members of Union; all members necessarily apprenticed, 506; Newcastle Union did not support men who refused masters' wages, 506. *Present state of trade*, Rules and *opinions* of Newcastle-upon-Tyne shipwrights, as to non-unionists; as to shipjoiners; overtime; apprentices; limitation of a day's work; minute conditions of labour, 508—510; strikes common; last strike in 1859, successful, but with intimidation, 510. 1851, Master shipbuilders of the Tyne draw up rules by which alone they shall be governed, 510, 511.

SHIPWRIGHTS OF THE WEAR.

(512—517.)

Employer's evidence, Union unnecessary and injurious to trade, chiefly in its rules as to uniform wage and apprentices; but without its intervention no general rise of wages has taken place, 512. *From Sunderland Times*, Decrease of Sunderland trade shown and attributed to strikes, 512, 513. *From Mr. Pringle's pamphlet*, Improper rules as to the use of unskilled labour, and extortionate demands; rather than desert their Union the men refused a promise of constant employment, 514, 515. *From the Operative Shipwrights' defence*, By Union, wages have increased, and shipbuilding improved in quality, 515—517.

DUBLIN SHIPWRIGHTS.

Evidence before Parliamentary Committee, 1838—The Union had driven the trade away from the town, 517.

BRISTOL SHIPWRIGHTS.

Evidence before Parliamentary Committee, 1825—The Bristol shipwrights bought off and sent back shipwrights imported during a strike from Plymouth; enforced a monopoly by intimidation, 517.

LONDON SHIPWRIGHTS.

Evidence before Parliamentary Committee, 1825—1802, Strike for six months as to the right of the operatives on contract work to select those who should be employed, 517, 518; disputes as to uniform wage; as to apprentices, 519; charge of oppression against the Union, 520.

TRADE COMBINATIONS IN SHEFFIELD.

(521—585.)

Sheffield, its monopoly of steel goods; Hallamshire, its water-power and quarries, 521.

1590—The ordinances of the Fellowship of Cutlers, the prototype of Trade Union rules, 522; the object, the "relief of the porer sorte;" rules as to compulsory holidays and apprentices, 523. 1624, Act giving incorporation and monopoly to cutlers of Hallamshire, 524. 1791, Act amended, slight relaxation of rule as to apprentices, 524. 1787, Strike against making thirteen knives to the dozen, 525. 1790, Grinders committed for refusing to complete work at reduced wages, 526. 1791, Resolution of masters to prosecute members of combinations; Scissor Smiths' Benefit (Trade) Society formed, 526. 1796, Strike of cutlers for advance, 526. 1809, Combinations of men and counter combinations of masters, 527. 1810, Masters subscribe to put down combinations, 527: the "Statement" prices of 1810 established as a compromise, 528. 1814, Advance demanded; Sheffield Mercantile and Manufacturing Union established, the last combination of masters, and a failure; its oppressive trade rules fixing prices, &c., its tremendous penalties, 528, 529; Hallamshire monopoly and restrictions as to apprentices, removed by Act, henceforward secured by Trade Unions, 529, 530.

A Sheffield wheel as contrasted with a factory: the master finds material only, the man finds machinery, and fixes his own hours, 530; small cost of tools; home labour practicable, 531; operatives sometimes hired for a term of years, 531. "Little Masters," find their own materials and sell to "factors;" their goods inferior, and often bear forged trade-marks; their position generally below that of operatives, 532, 533. Apprentices bound to journeymen; their position, 533. Social consequences of labour at home; viz. multiplication of electors; chastity of women; employment of women and children, 534. Sheffield drunkenness, 534. Approximation of the two classes; the operatives independent and of a high type; the masters driving an unspeculative trade, rarely very rich, rarely insolvent, join trade unions against factors and little masters; not themselves combined; dependent on workmen; lock-outs rare, 534, 535.

1814, Advance of wages, 536. 1820, Depression: Trade Union formed of masters and men to keep up wages, 536. 1828 and 1830, Proposals to renew this Union, but declined by masters on politico-economical grounds, 536—538. 1831, Trade revives, then sinks till 1833, 538. 1833, Formation of Freemen's Society of operatives and "little masters" to procure re-enactment of restrictive clauses, 538. 1833—1836, Prosperity, 538. 1837—1842; Great depression: amount of relief, under the poor-laws and from the Trade Unions, 538—540; Sheffield Union refuses to join in political agitation of other trades, 538, 541, 543; but trade outrages frequent, 541, 542. 1843, Suggestion by Board of Guardians for masters to employ as many men as possible at however low wages, 541; address of Trade Societies' Committee attributing distress to machinery and too cheap goods, and proposing union of all Sheffield trades, and of both masters and men, and purchase of land for spade-cultivation by the unemployed, 542, 543. 1844, Outrages increase: formation of the "Sheffield Manufacturers and Tradesmen Protection Society" to indemnify sufferers, 543; protest by Trade Unions against the charges of instigating violence, 544. 1845, Public discussion between Trade Union Committee and the member for the borough on behalf of the masters, 544; instances of the beneficial effect of Union rules as to limitation of numbers and short-time system, 545. 1846, Complaints of the Trade Union against the proceedings of the Protection Society, 546; joint committee formed of masters and men to investigate outrages, sits for a year, but without success, 546.

File Trade—1829, Strike against reduction, compromise, 547. 1830, Union rules prohibiting parochial relief, and imposing on defaulters such "punishment as the trade should think proper": "saw-webbing" the consequence, 547, 548. 1836: Demand of men for a rise, counter-demand of masters for removal of restrictions as to apprentices; strike and lock-out; public subscriptions on both sides; compromise, 548—552. 1846, Advance, 552. 1848, Distress, but parochial relief superseded, 552. 1853, Advance enforced and expenses of men also, 553; bonus divided amongst members, 553. 1854, Advance, but permanent relaxation as to apprentices established, 553, 554. Women nominally excluded from men's work, 555. Organization of the Filesmiths' Union, 555—557. Trade outrages, 557, 558.

Penknife Grinders; never united or prosperous for long, 558. 1842, Overwhelmed with arrears of rent for wheel-room; the cause of distress being the spurious manufacture of "crashers," 559, 560; their short lives, 562; their repeated efforts to combine, 560, 562, 563; cannot combine because the trade must breed "little masters," 564.

List of Sheffield trades, those in union, those not in union, 565.

Association of Organized Trades in Sheffield, established in 1859, 566; in all cases endeavours to prevent Strikes; if that fails, endorses the Strike and circulates appeals to the trades, but does not itself contribute, 566—568; recommends Courts of Conciliation to be compulsory, and to be established for each town, not for each trade, 568, 569.

Table-Knife Trade, forgers, grinders, hafters, 570—574. *Hafters*, 1844—1847, Prosperity; Union strong; the town divided into districts; bills of the accumulations of past reductions enforced by Strikes, 571. 1847, Distress and dissolution of the Society, 571; their present hard condition, 572; their dispute with the grinders, who being more united have compelled a return to former prices, 572—574. *Railway Spring Makers:* united in 1857; three Strikes in the last ten years; present relations cordial, 574—576. *Scissors Trade:* Union virtually non-existent, yet the trade has not suffered, 576, 577. *Sickle Forgers and Grinders:* Their successful strike in 1858 for an advance, 577. *File Grinders:* Unionists are better off than non-unionists, 578. *Trade Outrages:* instances of; rattening; explosions; causes—against men, default of payment or refusal to join the Union; against masters, employment of non-unionists, or too many apprentices, or machinery, 578—582; these outrages instigated and even organized by the Unions, 583. *Communication from the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce:* Unionists generally better than non-unionists, but unions prevent inventions in trade, especially of machinery, and provoke foreign competition, 583—585.

LEGISLATION AFFECTING LABOUR IN FRANCE.

(587—598.)

Compagnonnage, or universal tramp-system, 588. *Prud'hommes* with appeal to the Tribunal du Commerce, settle trade disputes; the representatives of masters and men formerly mutually, now separately elected; the president formerly elected, now an Imperial nominee; the judgments of late favour the workmen, 588, 589. Hours of labour reduced in 1848; afterwards raised to twelve per diem, 590; Laws as to employment of children, 590; laws as to apprentices, 591; *Livret*, or the industrial passport, 592. Strikes and all combinations prohibited; but masters allowed to meet in "*chambres d'entrepreneurs*," 593.

THE DISCUSSION AT GLASGOW, SEPTEMBER 27TH, 1860.

THE RT. HON. SIR J. PAKINGTON, BART., M.P., PRESIDING.

(595—623.)

Paper read on the previous day by Mr. Potter (*manufacturer*). Labour is a mere commodity, the bargain for it to be settled by competition. The bargaining labourer is helpless only because he does not save; he is unfit to be copartner with the master. Trade Unions are fallacies, they *cannot* raise wages, they only destroy individual effort and invention, 595—597.—Mr. T. Hughes (*barrister*) moved the Report be received. The one point of difference is, "Is labour a mere commodity?" Delegates are not common agitators. Trade tribunals are possible, 598—600.—Sir A. Alison (*Sheriff of Lanarkshire*) contrasted the views of men and masters about Trade Unions, and spoke of Strikes, their awful cost, past outrages, and present improvement in the conduct of them, 600—602.—Mr. E. Potter (*manufacturer*); Labour *is* a commodity, combinations of any kind are wrong: interference by arbitrators between master and man is objectionable, 608.—Mr. Hadfield, M.P., in reference to the Report, repudiated on behalf of the Sheffield Trade Unions any complicity in trade outrages, 604.—Mr. Hastings (*barrister*); Combination exists in professions, then why not in trade? Unions are necessary, and, as a fact, prevent Strikes, 604, 605.—Mr. Fawcett; Labour *is* a commodity, and by combination the labourer gets the best price for his commodity, and becomes a copartner. Delegates have been misrepresented, 605.—Mr. H. Ashworth (*manufacturer*); Why is labour *not* a commodity? Combinations are necessary both for master and man, but Trade Union policy, especially the rule of uniform wages, is bad. Arbitrators are only interferers, 606, 607.—Mr. Godfrey Lushington (*barrister*); Unions and their rules are clumsy but necessary expedients to secure fair play: masters would gain by substituting for them Courts of Conciliation, 607, 608.—Mr. Fergus; Lanarkshire engineers have suffered from the system of overtime, 608.—Mr. Lloyd Jones; Why should not sellers of labour, like sellers of other commodities, combine to fix prices? But labour is something more than a commodity. Arbitration is expedient, 609.—Mr. G. Lefevre (*barrister*); The price of labour depends upon supply and demand. Unions are necessary; they have improved in their character, 610.—Mr. F. H. Hill, B.A., showed that the charge in the Report against Sheffield Unions was not without foundation, 610.—Mr. A. Campbell, defended the Glasgow Cotton-spinners of 1837, 611.—Mr. Campbell (*delegate of the Glass Makers*), Trade Unions act on the principle of supply and demand, and limit the supply, 611.—Mr. Dunning (*operative bookbinder*); Combination alone secures a fair market price for the commodity of labour: arbitration should be compulsory, 612, 613.—Mr. E. Ashworth (*manufacturer*); The case of domestic servants shows that without combination wages will rise. Combination *cannot* raise wages, is only a barrier between master and man, 613, 614.—Mr. Dunlop (*Ex-Chairman of Master Cotton-Spinners of Glasgow*); The wages of cotton-spinners are settled amicably by conference between masters and delegates, but would be the same, if there were no Union, 614.—Mr. J. H. Cooper (*representative of the Letter-press Printers*) spoke as to the beneficial effects of his own Trade Union 615.—Mr. Lindsay; Trade Unions should not exclude

non-unionists; but they enforce the market price, and no more: uniform rate is a fair average rate. Arbitration by men of the *same* trade is practicable, 615, 616.—Mr. Ludlow (*barrister*) justified Trades' Unions by extracts from Mr. Potter's paper. All associations should be registered: the market price of labour is ascertainable; therefore arbitration by a mixed court of employers and men should supersede Strikes, which are remnants of barbarism, 617, 618. —Mr. Pope; Arbitration is possible: it succeeds in the potteries, 618.—Mr. Bazley, M.P. (*manufacturer*) endorsed the views of Mr. Potter. The increase of capital, and not combination, has kept up wages, 619.—Mr. Scott; Combination prevents wages from falling.—Mr. Maunder; The workman can do without Unions, 620, 621.—Mr. P. H. Rathbone (*underwriter*); Unions should exclude politics. Slanderous balance-sheets are to be reprobated by the working class, 622.—Mr. Hughes summed up.

APPENDIX.

I.—Address of the Trade Union Committee, 624.
II.—Questions submitted to Officers of Trade Societies, 625—627.
III.—Questions submitted to Employers of Labour, 627.
IV.—Questions relating to Strikes proposed to Employers' Associations and Trade Societies, 628.
V.—Another Address, 629.

INDEX.

Accounts. See *Balance-Sheets.*

Allment, *To those on strike*, 141—145; also, Builders, 73; Carpenters, 287, 296; Chain Makers, 157; Cloth Lappers, 276; Cloth Trade, 377; Coopers, 275; Cotton-Spinners, 393, 397; Engineers, 184; Glass Makers, 113; Iron Founders, 317; Masons, 285; Miners, 29, 43; Painters, 293; Paper Makers, 376; Potters, 281; Printers, 84—86; Shoemakers, 6; Tailors, 278; Weavers, 443. *To the unemployed*, 141—145; also Printers, 80, 404; Sheffield, 555; Potters, 281.

Apprenticeship, principle of, 413; *evils of restriction*, Builders, 428; Engineers, 192; Printers, 407; Sheffield, 554; Ship Builders, 429. *Evils of no restriction*, Builders, 334, 413, 414; Coopers, 276; Engineers, 193; Iron Founders, 316; Masons, 334; Painters, 291; Plasterers, 123; Potters, 283; Printers, 124, 405, 406; Seamen, 380; Watch-Makers, 329.—Rules of Union Concerning; (1) *Restriction as to number; absolutely*, Builders, 414; Cabinet-Makers, 369; Carpenters, 367, 419, 422, 423; Flannel Weavers, 381; Hatters, 353; Painters, 427; Printers, 79, 84, 88, 124, 125, 406; Sheffield, 523, 549, 550, 554, 558, 578; Ship Builders, 429; Shoemakers, 4, 355; *relatively*, Bakers, 296; Bookbinders, 99; Calico Printers, 403; Coachmakers, 118; Engineers, 193; Flat pressers, 135; Glass Makers, 105, 110, 111, 122; Machine Makers, 318; Painters, 137; Paper Makers, 376; Printers, 406; Saw Makers, 131; Slaters, 136; Shipwrights, 480, 488, 490, 491, 499, 502, 504, 508. (2) *Restriction as to age, of the apprentice*, Iron Founders, 318; Masons, 116; Sheffield, 578; Shipwrights, 501, 508; Shoemakers, 4; *of the journeyman*, Chain Makers, 168; Iron Founders, 318; Plasterers, 426; Sheffield, 554, 558, 578. (3) *Indenture necessary*, Chain Makers, 168; Engineers, 193; Glass Makers, 121; Iron Founders, 318; Masons, 116; Painters, 292, 297; Printers, 79, 84; Steam-Engine Makers, 121. (4) *Relationship privileged*, Builders, 414; Carpenters, 367; Coopers, 275; Cotton-Spinners, 397; Coachmakers, 118; Irish Woollen Trade, 367; Masons, 116; Plasterers, 426. (5) *Premium required to men*, Calico Printers, 403; Chain Makers, 168; Miners, 382; Shoemakers, 4. (6) *Restriction as to their work*, Calico Printers, 403; Shipwrights, 480; see also 193, 271, 318. (7) *Regulations as to pay*, Carpenters, 421; Painters, 292; Shipwrights, 508. Required for admission into the Union, see *Union, effect upon the skill of the Workman;* required by the masters, Shipwrights, 494; required by Statute, 342; in France, 591.—*Usual term of*, five years, Bakers, 296; six years, Coopers, 276; Painters, 292; seven years, Calico Printers, 403; Masons, 286; Painters, 298; Potters, 283. *Usual payment*, Calico Printers, 403; Machine Makers, 318; Masons, 286; Potters, 283; Sawyers, 424. *Miscellaneous particulars*, Bakers, 295; Glass Makers, 104, 122; Shipwrights, 480, 488, 500, 510, 519.

Apprentices, "club," 414, 420, 421, 425; unsteady to their masters, Potters, 283; Shipwrights, 494; come from small shops, Coopers, 276; from irregular masters, Builders, 413, 414; Printers, 406; from the country, Printers, 405; organized into a Union, Shipwrights, 500.

Arbitration; *its practicability considered*, Report, xiv, xix, xxi, 272, Discussion, 596—620; Sheffield, 568, 569; Shipwrights, 502, 512; Weavers, 326, 328; *required by rules of Union*, Carpenters, 287; Compositors, 86; Miners (Scottish), 306; Painters (Glasgow), 293; Potters, 282; Tailors (Glasgow), 279; Tailors (Liverpool), 138; *offered by men and refused by masters, before a strike*, Cotton-Spinners, 216, do. 216, do. 217; Engineers, 182; Miners, 306; during a Strike, Cotton-Spinners (Preston), 244, 247; Cotton-Spinners (Manchester) 394; Engineers, 184; Miners, 34; *offered by Masters and refused by men, during a strike*, Painters (Glasgow), 293;—settled Padiham dispute, 459.

Bakers, Glasgow, 134, 295, 296.

Balance-Sheets, *of Unions*, Carpenters (Glasgow), 288; Cloth Lappers (Glasgow), 277; Engineers, 188, 195; Masons (Glasgow), 284; Printers, 78—80, 404; Sheffield, 570; Tailors (Glasgow), 278; Watch-Makers (Coventry), 329; *of Strikes*, Builders, 73, 74; Cotton-Spinners (Preston), 249—263; Cotton Weavers (Padiham), 464—468.

Bellows Cutting. See *Interference.*

Benefit Society, as joined with Trade Union, xiv, 88, 144.

Birmingham Trades, 363, 364.

Black List, *kept by Masters*, Builders, 333; Glass Makers, 106; Shoemakers, 321; *kept by Unions*, see *Interference.*

Blackburn, 211, 219, 239, 433.

Bolton, 208.

Bookbinders, 93—104, 123. See 633.

Bricklayers, *of London*, join in the great Building Strike, 53—71, 632; esp. 54, 56, 67, 73, 117; *of Dublin*, 409—418, 423, 424.

Builders, *of London*, 53—71; see 632; early statutes against, 340; *of Dublin*, 409—418.

Butty system, 303.

Cabinet-Makers, 369.

Calico Printers, of Belfast, 403; of Dublin, 370.

Canal Boatmen, of Dublin, 430.

Carpenters and Joiners, of London, 53—76, 632; esp. 54, 56, 67, 73, 117, 355; of Glasgow, 135, 286; of Dublin, 367—369, 412, 418—423.

Central Committee. See *Union, Constitution of.*

Chain Makers, 147—168. See 634.
Cheapness, effect of, Builders, 410; Sheffield, 542; Potters, 283; Watch-Makers, 329.
Choice of operatives denied to Masters by Union, Glass Makers, 110, 113; Sheffield 544, 556; Sawyers, 425.
Cloth Lappers (Glasgow), 134, 276.
Cloth-Workers (Leeds), 359.
Cloth Trade (Wakefield), 377.
Coachmakers, 118, 330, 369.
Coal. See *Miners*.
Collision of Trades, Carpenters and Seamen, 379; Engineers and Cotton Machine Makers, 351; Gilders and Painters, 294; Shipwrights and Ship-Joiners, 502, 507.
Colonial branches of Union, Engineers, 186.
Combination Laws, xviii, 338—350, 636; effect of, 350—372, 636—638; enforced against men, 352—355, 359, 360, 363, 364, 369, 370, 526; against masters, Carpenters, 355; Stocking-Makers, 362; Saddlers, 371; Masters refuse to enforce, Cloth-Workers, 359; Printers, 353. See *Union*.
Commodity; is Labour a mere commodity? Discussion, 595—628.
Competition, compels the use of machinery, Bootmakers, 7; prevents masters from combining, Sheffield, 535; Potters, 281; leads to multiplication of apprentices, Printers, 406; Builders, 410; and to inferior work, Builders, 410; Potters, 283; Watch-Makers, 329.
Conspiracy. See *Combination*.
Contracts of masters taken advantage of by men, Sheffield, 544; Shipwrights, 491.
Contract-work prohibited by Union, to men, Masons, 285; Miners, 305; Painters, 297; Printers, 125; Ship-Joiners, 299; Shipwrights, 491, 503; to masters, Shipwrights, 481, 486, 489.
Control over workmen denied to masters, Shipwrights, 481, 487, 518; Canal Boatmen, 431.
Co-operation, Report, xviii; Engineers, 184; Glass Makers, 110, 121, 122; Cotton Weavers and Spinners, Padiham, 436; Rochdale, 436; Miners, 302, 306; Painters, 294; Discussion, 616.
Coopers, Glasgow, 123, 134, 274—276; London, 374—376.
Cotton, *Spinners*, Glasgow, 355—358, 383, 384; Manchester, Glasgow, and Belfast, 389—403; see 637; Preston, 207—263; see 635. *Weavers*, Ashton, 472—478; Glasgow, 357; Padiham, 433—472. See 636.
Country Work, extra wages for, Painters, Liverpool, 137; Glasgow, 291; Dublin, 428; Plasterers, Liverpool, 138.
Coventry Trades. See *Watch-Makers, Weavers*.
Cowell, George, the Preston agitator, 210; arrested, 240; his farewell speech, 248.

Declaration, *as to abandonment of Union*, Bootmakers, 320; Builders, 65; Engineers, 263; Glass Makers, 109; Miners, 31; Shipwrights, 492—494, 506; *as to particular matters*, Glass Makers, 112; Cotton-Spinners, 394.
Deductions from wages, Canal Trade, 430; Chain Makers, 152; Cotton Weavers, 452, 453; Glass Makers, 122; Miners, 12, 13, 310.
Delegates, charges against, *made or proved*, Chain Makers, 156, 157; Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 401; Preston, 212, 214, 218, 240, 253; Cotton Weavers, Padiham, 467, 468; Engineers, 178; Masons, 334; Miners, 33, 301, 305, 313, 314; *denied or disproved*, Report, xvi; Discussion, 599, 605; Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 401; Manchester, 394; Preston, 238, 241, 251, 252; Engineers, 187, 198; Miners, 40, 41, 304; *sums actually paid to*, Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 397; Cotton Weavers, Padiham, 466; Sheffield, 578; Shoemakers, 6; Printers, 404; Plasterers, 425.
Discussion at Glasgow, 595—623, 642.
Dismissal for connexion with Union, Builders, 60; Carpenters, 287; Coopers, 275; Cotton-Spinners, 396; Miners, 43.
District Branches. See *Union, Constitution of*.

Education, the subject of a petition to Parliament by Miners, 41, 309; want of, amongst Potters, 282.
Emigration, Printers, 81, 88, 404; Engineers, 119; Cotton-Spinners, 232.
Employment, rules of Union as to members procuring employment, Bakers, 295; Carpenters, 421; Coopers, 124; Engineers, 194; Glass Makers, 122; Upholsterers, 132.
Engineers, 119, 169—205. See 351, 634.
Equalization of wages. See *Wages*.

Factory, Act not observed, Cotton-Spinners, 392; workers compared with home workers, Chain Makers, 152; as compared with a Sheffield wheel, 530.
Fines, *on men by masters*, Chain Makers, 151; Cotton-Spinners, 400; Ironfounders, 319; Miners, 31, 32, 309, 310; *in masters' Union rules*, Cotton-Spinners, Preston, 215, 232; Manchester, 394; Carpenters (Glasgow), 290; Sheffield, 528.
Footings, abolished by Union, Coopers, 275; Shipwrights, 501; their existence in mines, 303.
Foremen, Association of, Shipwrights, 497; controlled by Union, Carpenters, 422, 423; Shipwrights, 481, 485, 487, 490, 497, 511; Saddlers, 371; Spinners, 357.

Gilders, dispute with Painters, 294.
Glasgow Trades. See *Bakers, Carpenters, Cloth Lappers, Coopers, Cotton-Spinners, Masons, Painters, Plumbers, Potters, Slaters, Tailors, Tin Plate Workers*. Council of United Trades, 273.
Glass Makers, 104—114, 633.
Govan Colliery Friendly Free Labour Society, 312.
Government, rough work done for, Builders, 410.
Guild of Cutlers, 522—534.

Hatters, 353.
Hiring, term of, minimum fixed by the Statute of Apprentices, 342; maximum fixed by the Union rules, Bakers, 134; Coopers, 275; Slaters, 137; Tin Plate Workers, 133; method of, Sheffield, 531.
Holidays, Drunken Monday, Miners, 303, 304; Monday morning, Silk-Workers, 361; Builders, 335; Tuesday afternoon, Sheffield, 523.
Home Secretary, appealed to both by masters and men, Preston Lock-out, 219
Hours of labour, *per week*:—
57, Masons (Glasgow), 285; Painters (Glasgow), 290.
57½, Masons (Bradford), 336.
59, Printers (England), 84, 125.
60, Scotch Printers, 87; Coopers, 275; Carpenters, 297; Cloth Lappers, 276; Painters, 298.
69, Cotton-Spinners, 393, 402.
per diem:—
8, Miners, 45.
10, Bookbinders, 98; Dublin Printers, 88, 405; Potters, 282; Ship-Joiners, 298.
10½, London Printers, 87; Carpenters, 420.
10¾, Plasterers, 425.
12, Bakers, 135; Tailors (Glasgow), 279; Liverpool, 137; *in France*, 590.

Imported Labourers, Bakers, 295; Cotton-Spinners, 234, *et seq.*; Miners, 34, 307; Sheffield, 551; Shipwrights, 491—493, 500, 515; their inferior character, Miners, 34; Cotton-Spinners, 234—237, 243; their treatment, Shipwrights, 481—515; Spinners, 235; they leave after a strike, 270; Miners, 38; Weavers, 327.
Information, generally given, Report, vii; refused by Amalgamated Shipwrights' Society, 505; by master Engineers, 170; by Glass Manufacturers, 105.
Interference, Illegal, Laws respecting, 69—71; 348—350; generally on the decline, Report, xvi, xviii; Coopers, 375; Cotton-Spinners of Manchester, 395, 396; of Glasgow, 400—402, Discussion, 601; of Preston, 238—241; Engineers, 185, 188; Miners, 30, 33, 308; Seamen, 379; Stocking-Makers, 362; Union is professedly opposed to it, Cotton-Spinners of Manchester, 395; of Preston, 241; Builders, 417; Sheffield, 542; sometimes however organizes it, Builders (Dublin), 416; Sheffield, 583; and is always responsible for it, 558; instances of, *a.* Intimidation:
1. Against men, *black lists*, Coventry Weavers, 327; Chain Makers, 148; Coachmakers, 117, 330; Hatters, 353; Masons, 117; Tailors, 280; *picketing mills*, &c., Builders, 68; Cloth Trade, Wakefield, 377; Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 357, 400, 401; Manchester, 396; Cotton Weavers, Padiham, 456; Miners, 30, 308; Shoemakers, 3; *scandalous threats*, Cotton-Spinners, Preston, 253; Cotton Weavers, Padiham, 457, Discussion, 622; *threats of violence*, Builders, 416; Cotton-Spinners, 232, 233, 241, 243; Printers, 409; Sheffield, 579, &c. &c.
2. Against masters, Builders, 416; Cotton-Spinners, 357, 401; Coventry Weavers, 327; Printers, 409; Sheffield, 579.

b. Actual outrage:
1. To property, bellows cut, Chain Makers, 151, 156, 162; "rattening," Sheffield, 541; boats sunk, Dublin, 431; incendiarism and explosions, Chain Makers, 156; Sheffield, 521.
2. To men, Builders, 415, 416; Carpenters, 368, 369; Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 358, 383, 384, 401; Preston, 237; Coachmakers, 369; Sawyers, 361, 362; Seamen, 379; Sheffield, 543, 548, 557, 579—583; Shipwrights, 481, 482, 495.
3. To masters, Carpenters, 368, 369; Builders, 415, 416; Cotton-Spinners, Glasgow, 357: Preston, 219; Sheffield, 557, 578—583; Shipwrights, 415, 416.

Irish Trades. See *Builders*, *Cabinet-Makers*, *Calico Printers*, *Canal Trade*, *Coachmakers*, *Cotton-Spinners*, *Printers*, *Saddlers*, *Shipbuilders*, *Woollen Manufacturers*.
Iron Founders, 316—320.
Ironmongers, 315—319.

Jobbing. See *Contract Work*.
Joiners. See *Carpenters*.

Knaresborough Linen Weavers, 360.

Lace Makers of Nottingham, 130.
Lancashire Weavers, 358.
Leeds Cloth-Workers, 359.
Legislation concerning Unions, 338—350; improvements in, as to legalizing Unions, xix, xxi, 272, 273; as to courts of conciliation, 566, 569, Discussion, 595—622.
Leicester Stocking-Makers, 362.
Libel, action against Union, Printers, 83.
Limit of the day's work, *when payment is by the piece*, Miners, 21—24, 29, 269, 305, 306; Iron Founders, 318; *when payment is by the day*, Seamen, 128; Shipwrights, 484, 486, 496, 500, 506, 509.
Liverpool Trades. See *Painters*, *Plasterers*, *Plumbers*, *Sawyers*, *Shipwrights*, *Tailors*.
Livret, 592.
Local restrictions as to operatives, enforced by Union, Carpenters (Dublin), 419; Sheffield, 528; Shipwrights, 488, 489, 490, 492, 495, 496, 497, 499, 502, 515.
Lock-out, Bookbinders, 95; do. 100; Builders, 53; Cotton-Spinners, 206, 217; Engineers, 169; Glass Makers, 105; Miners, 11; Sheffield, 548.
London Trades, Bookbinders, 93—104; Builders, 53—76; Engineers, 168—205; Printers, 76—87; Tailors, Hatters, Shoemakers, Carpenters, Builders, 353—355.

Macclesfield Silk-Workers, 360.
Machine Makers, 351.
Machine Printers, 122.
Machinery, introduction of, general remarks upon, 7—9; caused by Strikes, Bootmakers, 324; Cotton-Spinners, 402; is opposed by some Unions, Bootmakers, 2, 324; Coachmakers, 369; Sawyers, 425; Sheffield, 584; Shipwrights, 496, 504; this opposition disapproved of by the best societies, 6, 149; Engineers, 188; claim of Builders for a rise of wages as their lawful profit from machinery, 56; large machinery, its effect upon wages, Cotton-Spinners, 389—392; Coventry Weavers, 328.
Manufactured Material, opposition to the use of, Masons, 286—334; Sawyers (Dublin), 415.
Masons of London, join in the nine hours' movement and Builders' strike of 1859, 53—71; see esp. 54, 56, 67, 73; Rules of, 116; of Glasgow, 284—286; of Dublin, 409—424.
Masters, "fair" and "unfair," Miners, 304; Hatters, 353; Builders, 410; Sawyers, 428, &c.; "little masters," Sheffield, 532, 533; refuse to recognise Union, Chain Makers, 154, 158; Cotton-Spinners, 216; Engineers, 202; but they should recognise it, Report, xvii, 187; sometimes members of Union, Tailors, 300, Sheffield, 534; on good terms with their men, Printers, 353, *secus*, Tailors, 353; Cotton Weavers, 442, 455; on better terms after a Strike, Chain Makers, 158; Miners, 40; their social position towards men, Sheffield, 534, 535; the law of master and servant, 309; seldom very united, Birmingham, 363; Coopers, 376; Cotton-Spinners, 217—230; Cotton Weavers, 456; Hatters, 354; Masons, 285; Sheffield, 535; Shipwrights, 492; Tailors, 276; Potteries, 281.
——Associations, Bookbinders, 100; Builders, 63—72; Coal-Owners, 20—41, Cotton-Spinners, 208—249, 396, 443; Engineers, 169—205; Glass Manufacturers, 107—114; Joiners, 289; Masons, 331—333; Shoemakers, 320; Sheffield, 527, 528; *created by strike*, Bootmakers, 5; Glass Makers, 107; Engineers, 181; organized into districts, Builders, 332; *their objects*, to keep down wages, Cotton-Spinners, 218; Miners, 25; Sheffield, 528; *secus*, Shoemakers, 320; to regulate trade, Cloth Lappers, 277; Miners, 25; Shipwrights, 492, 511; Sheffield, 528; to check Union, Builders, 331; Glass Manufacturers, 168; Joiners, 289; Shoemakers, 320, &c.; to extinguish Unions, Builders, 63; Joiners, 288, and see *Declaration: their rules, general*. Builders, 63, 331; Engineers, 202; Glass Manufacturers, 107; Joiners, 289; Shoemakers, 320; *special*, not to employ men without note, Calico Printers 370; Coal-

Owners, 25, 383; Glass Manufacturers, 106; Shipwrights, 506; to support masters who are struck against, Coal-Owners, 26; Cotton Weavers, 443; Glass Manufacturers, 106; Shoemakers, 320; Weavers, 443; to raise a Strike Insurance Fund, Miners, 41; to lock-out if necessary, Cotton-Spinners, 394; Engineers, 178; Joiners, 288, 289; Shipwrights, 506; to exact a declaration, see *Declaration*, 1.—*Rules enforced by Fines*, Cotton-Spinners, 215, 240, 394; Joiners, 290; *their proceedings secret*, Engineers, 182, 183; Miners, 20.

Mediation offered by townsmen, Cotton-Spinners, 244—246; Cotton Weavers, 453; by manufacturers, Cotton Weavers, 458; by Local Board of Health, Coventry Weavers, 326; by London Society of Arts, Cotton-Spinners, 228.

Miners, Adwalton, 43, 139; Barnsley, 43, 140; Lancashire and Cheshire, 138, 303; Newcastle, 373, 374; Scottish, 306—315, 382; Staffordshire, 300—303; Yorkshire, West, 11—51; Yorkshire, South, 38.

Morality. See *Union*, its effect upon the moral character.

Morocco Leather Finishers, 132.

Mortality in Trade, Builders, 75; Ironfounders, 317; Miners, 49; Potters, 282; Sheffield, 563; increased by Strikes. See *Strikes*.

Newcastle Chain Makers. See *Chain Makers*.

Newspapers, to circulate trade statistics, Bookbinders' Circular, 103; Chain Makers' Journal, 148, 163; Miners, 306; Plasterers, 123; Potters, 281; Voice of the People, 392; to employ the unemployed, Printers, 80.

Nicknames, "Blacks," Coachmakers, 330; Sheffield, 526; "Black sheep," 30; "Colts," Builders, 410; "Knob-sticks," Coventry Weavers, 327; "Nobs," Cotton-Spinners, 401; "Scabs," Shoemakers, 3.

Non-Unionists, Prohibitions to Unionists to work with; *absolute prohibitions*, Bakers, 135; Miners (Adwalton), 139; Printers, 86, 408; Seamen, 127; Shipwrights, 484, 504, 507; Upholsterers, 133; *conditional upon the Union having a majority or enforcing its rules in the shop*, Painters, 137; Printers, 78; Tailors (Glasgow); 280; Tin Plate Workers, 133; Ship-Joiners, 299; *no prohibitions*, Cotton-Spinners, 395, 398; Coventry Weavers, 326; Engineers, 188; Miners, 21; *treatment of*, see *Interference*.

Notice, *before leaving*, none, Cotton-Spinners, 400; Painters, 290; Plasterers, 425; a week, Chain Makers, 154; Bakers, 295; a fortnight, Glass Makers, 104; Ironfounders, 319; Printers, 125, 405; a month, Printers, 125; if given by Secretary of Union on behalf of the operatives, questionable, Chain Makers, 154; Masons, 337; *before change of terms*, ten days, Shipwrights, 487, 489; six months, Glasgow Masons, 285; a year, Painters, 291; Sheffield, 573; evils of no notice, Cotton-Spinners, 394, 399.

Nottingham Stocking-Makers, 362.

Oversupply of labour market, Engineers, 192, 193; Printers, 82; Trades in 1838, 388; Seamen, 126, &c.—*Rules of Trade Union to prevent it*, requiring apprenticeship and limiting number of apprentices, see *Apprenticeship*; excluding unskilled labour, see *Unskilled*; prohibiting the employment of women, see *Women*; imposing local restrictions, see *Local*; limiting hours of labour, see *Hours* and Sheffield, 545; Weavers, 331; promoting Emigration, see *Emigration*.

Overtime, *reasons for*, its necessity, 190, 191; it rewards the industrious, 266; *reasons against*; *its results*, Excessive work, 188; deprivation to the unemployed, 188; deterioration of the workman, 174, 608; drunkenness, 268; loss of proper leisure, 174; general reduction of wages, 268, 544, 545.—Disliked or prohibited, by Bakers, 295; Coachmakers, 118; Engineers, 117, 173, 608; Masons, 116; Miners, 268, 305; Painters, 291; Shipwrights, 507; Ship-Joiners, 298; Tailors, 279;—not discountenanced, by Miners, 268; Potters, 282; Sheffield, 531.

Padiham, Weavers, 433—472, 638.

Painters, of Dublin, 409—418, 426—428; of Glasgow, 290—295; of Liverpool, 137—297; of London, 54; join in the Builders' Strike of 1859, 54—72, esp. 54, 57, 67, 73.

Paper Makers, 376.

Parliamentary Committees upon Combinations, 350—431, 636—638.

Petition, to Parliament, by Miners, 46, 48, 302; by Preston Townsmen, 236; from Sheffield Master Cutlers, 528;—to Home Secretary, by Preston men, 219; Preston masters, 219.

Pickets of Mills, &c. See *Interference*.

Piecework, Reasons for, 192, 481; Reasons against, 174, 188, 189, 267, 412.—Disliked or prohibited, by Builders, 412, 421, 425; Carpenters, 286, 296, 368; Coachmakers, 118; Engineers, 193; Masons, 285; Painters, 290; Plasterers, 138; Seamen, 128; Slaters, 137; Ship-Joiners, 298; Shipwrights, 481, 508, see also *Strikes*; Enforced by Union, Weavers, 375. For list of trades where payment is by the piece, see *Wages*.

Pitchpot yards, 483.

Pitshops, Tailors, 281.

Plasterers, of Dublin, 409—418, 425; of Liverpool, 138, 297; of London, 54—72, esp. 54, 67, 73, 122.

Plumbers, 133.

Poetical squibs, Sheffield 525, 526; balance-sheets, 253.

Politics discussed at Trade Unions, Shipwrights, 490; excluded, Sheffield, 546; ought always to be excluded, 622.

Poor-laws, their operation during Strikes, Preston, 222, 233, 236; Sheffield, 539, 542, 547.

Potters, 134, 135, 280.

Preston Strike, 207—263.

Printers, 76—92, 124, 125, 632; of London, 353; of Ireland, 408—409; of Scotland, 615.

Prud'hommes, 588.

Public-houses, Meetings of Union in, discontinued, by Bookbinders, 100; all Scottish Trades, 272, 306. Protest by Union against payment of wages in, Masons, 335; Shipwrights, 488, 491, 499.

Questions submitted to Employers of Labour, 627; to Trade Unions, 625; to both Employers and Trade Unions concerning Strikes, 628.

Railway Spring Makers, 131, 574.

Rochdale Flannel Weavers, 381.

Rules of Masters' Associations, see *Masters*; of Trade Unions, see *Union*.

Saddlers (Dublin), 370—372.

Saw Makers, Sheffield, 131.

Sawyers, of Liverpool, 361; of Dublin, 415, 424.

Scandalous threats by Union, Cotton-Spinners, 253; Cotton Weavers, 457; Discussion, 622.

Scotch Trades. See *Cotton-Spinners*, *Cotton Weavers*, *Miners*, *Glasgow*, *Printers*.

Seamen, 125, 378—380.

Secrecy, under Combination Laws, xix; should be abolished, xxi; required by Unions, Carpenters, 296, 420; Miners, 29; Engineers,

198; but not practised, 41, 183, 307, vii; practised by masters, Coal-Owners, 20, 25, 26, 41; Cotton-Spinners, 396; Engineers, 183.
Sheffield Trades, 521—585; 640—642.
Ship-Joiners, 298, 498.
Shipowners, their relation towards master and operative Shipwrights, 480, 481, 491; their Protection Society, 379.
Shipwrights, 479—521; 639, 640.
Shoemakers, of Northampton, 2—9, 631; of London, 320, 354; of Blackburn, 321.
Slaters, of Glasgow, 135.
"Slating," 368.
Smiths, 119, 318.
Society of Arts, 229.
Statistics of Trades, Builders, 53, 54; Printers, 76, 80, 91; Sheffield, 564—566; Shipwrights, 501, 505; Unions, 141—145.
Statutes, 70, 338—348, 636.
Steam-Engine Makers, 121.
Strikes, I. Precautions against Strikes. II. Causes of Strikes and their Issues. III. Conduct of Strikes. IV. Cost of Strikes. V. Effect of Strikes. VI. Miscellaneous Particulars.
I. *Precautions against Strikes.*
Private remonstrance with employer, Coachmakers, 118; Carpenters, 287, 296; Cotton-Spinners, 397; Iron Founders, 316; Masons, 117; Plumbers, 134; Power-Loom Weavers, 129; Tailors, 279.—*Offer of arbitration, prescribed by rules*, Miners, 306; Painters, 293; Potters, 282; Printers, 86; Tailors (Glasgow), 279; Tailors (Liverpool), 138; *as a fact made by men and refused by masters*, Cotton-Spinners, 296; do. 216, do. 217; Engineers, 182, 190; Miners, 306. *Restriction as to the causes for legal Strike*, Builders, 60; Carpenters, 117; Iron Founders, 316; Masons, 117. *Official investigation of complaint*, Coachmakers, 118; Cotton-Spinners, 395; Cotton Weavers, 439; Iron Founders, 316; Miners, 139; Railway Spring Makers, 122; Smiths, 121; Weavers, 129. *Restriction as to the numbers of those on Strike at the same time*, Carpenters, 117; Miners, 29; Potters, 134. *Information required by the Central Committee as to the number, &c., of those who are about to strike*, Masons, 117; Plumbers, 134. *General vote required of District or of the Central Committee*, Carpenters, 117; Cotton-Spinners, 397; Glass Makers, 122; Iron Founders, 316; Masons, 116, 117; Miners, 29, 43, 44, 139, 140; Painters, 297; Plasterers, 123; Potters, 135, 281; Seamen, 127; Weavers, 129, 438.

II. *Causes of Strikes and their Issues.*

	Successful.	Doubtful.	Unsuccessful.
For an advance of wages.	Carpenters, 287. Ditto, 288. Ditto, 288. Ditto, 355. Chain Makers, 156. Coopers, 275. Hatters, 354. Masons, 286. Miners, 306. Painters, 290. Ditto, 290. Saddlers, 370. Sheffield, 554. Ditto, 574. Ditto, 577. Ship-Joiners, 287. Shipwrights, 510. Stocking-Makers, 362.		Bakers, 295. Cotton-Spinners, 209. Ditto, 249. Miners, 301. Ditto, 373. Sawyers, 361. Shoemakers, 320.
Against a reduction of wages.....	Cloth-Workers, 359. Ditto, 360. Miners, 37. Printers, 78. Ditto, 79.	Printers, 81. Sheffield, 547. Shipwrights, 493.	Carpenters, 288. Cloth-Workers, 359. Cotton-Spinners, 394. Ditto, 397. Cotton Weavers, 356. Linen Weavers, 360. Ditto, 360. Ditto, 360. Miners, 306. Ditto, 306. Ditto, 306. Woollen Workers, 365, 366.
For a reduction of hours..	Bookbinders, 94. .... Carpenters, 287. Cloth Lappers, 276.	.....	Bookbinders, 98. Builders, 53, *et seq.*
Against extension of hours	Carpenters, 287. Silk-Workers, 360.		
About apprentices	Bookbinders, 99. Printers, 80.	Calico Printers, 403. Glass Makers, 105, *et seq.*	
Against Non-Unionists ..	Shoemakers, 321.	Printers, 83.	Hatters, 353. Shoemakers, 321. Printers, 80.
Against unskilled labour..	Printers, 81.		
Against dismissal of men	Shipwrights, 506. Boatmen, 430, 431.		
Against contract work ..	Shipwrights, 481		

	Successful.	Doubtful.	Unsuccessful.
Against weekly wages ..	Coventry Weavers, 325. Ditto, 327.		
Against Truck	Chain Makers, 153.		
Against Machinery.....	.....	.....	Shoemakers, 1—9. Ditto 323.
Against Pitshops.....	Tailors, 269.		
Against good-from-oven system	.....	.....	Potters, 282.
To secure same rate of wages for one year	.....	Painters, 293.	
To secure double pay for double use of the same type.....	Printers, 83.		
To secure overtime beginning earlier	Printers, 82.		
Generally	Hatters, 354..... Tailors, 353.	.....	Cotton-Spinners, 208. Ditto, 393. Iron Founders, 318.

III. *Conduct of Strike.*
Strike in detail, Builders, 59; Chain Makers, 153; Glass Makers, 107; Miners, 28. Offer of Arbitration during the Strike, by men and refused by masters, Cotton-Spinners, 244—247, 394; Engineers, 184; Miners, 34; by masters and refused by men, Painters, 293. Violence and intimidation, see *Interference.*

IV. *Cost of Strike.*
Bookbinders, 98, 100; Builders, 73; Chain Makers, 157; Coopers, 275; Cotton-Spinners, 215, 400; Cotton Weaving, 464, 465; Engineers, 186; Glass Makers, 113; Miners, 38; Scotland, Discussion, 601.

V. *Effects of Strike.*
Economic, the strike pays, Chain Makers, 158; Miners, 39; trade is injured, Shipwrights, 514. *Physical*, on the rate of mortality, Builders, 75; Cotton-Spinners, 221; Miners, 39. *Moral*, good, Chain Makers, 158; Miners, 38, 39; Report, xix; bad, Miners, 308.

VI. *Strikes. (Miscellaneous Particulars.)*
Encouraged by Masters, Cotton-Spinners, 396, 398; Cotton Weavers, 359; Stocking-Makers, 162; Weavers, 381; supported by public subscriptions, Sheffield, 551; Stocking-Makers, 362; Coventry Weavers, 328; forbidden by Union, Smiths, 119, 121; number of, in Printing Trade with causes analyzed, 83; legal and illegal, Builders, 69; not always enforced when legal, Printers, 82, 86; frequent, Carpenters, 287, Miners, 269; Weavers, 269; Shipwrights, 510, 514; illegal in France, 592; Anti-Strike Committee, Builders, 67.

Stock, Miners refuse to work for, 36, 37.
Stocking-Makers, 362.
Stockport, 211, 246, 247.

Tailors, of Glasgow, 277; of Liverpool, 137, 299; of London, 353.
Tin Plate Workers, 133.
Trades. See Bakers, Birmingham, Bookbinders, Bricklayers, Builders, Calico Printers, Canal Boatmen, Carpenters, Chain Makers, Cloth Lappers, Cloth-Workers, Coachmakers, Coopers, Cotton-Spinners, Cotton Weavers, Coventry Weavers, Engineers, Glass Makers, Iron Founders, Ironmongers, Joiners, Lace Makers, Machine Makers, Masons, Miners, Morocco Leather Finishers, Painters, Paper Makers, Plasterers, Plumbers, Potters, Printers, Railway Spring Makers, Saddlers, Saw Makers, Sawyers, Seamen, Sheffield Trades, Ship-Joiners, Shipwrights, Shoemakers, Silk-Workers, Slaters, Smiths, Steam-Engine Makers, Stocking-Makers, Tailors, Tin Plate Workers, Upholsterers, Watch-Makers, Weavers, Woollen Manufacturers.
Tramps, 141—146; Bootmakers, 6; Carpenters, 296; Coachmakers, 331; Iron Founders, 317; Masons, 286; Printers, 404; Tailors, 280; discouraged by Coopers, 276; by Potters, 281; Printers, 78, 80.
Truck, Bakers, 295; Builders (Dublin), 410; Chain Makers, 129, 130, 153, 168; Miners, 311; Sheffield, 560; Watch-Makers, 329.

Unemployed, ailment to the. See *Ailment.*
Number of, as compared with the employed, Printers, 81, 406; Sheffield, 539, 540.
Uniform Wages. See *Wages.*
Unions:—
I. Origin and history. II. Objects. III. Constitution. IV. Rules. V. Necessity. VI. Effects. VII. Present Position. VIII. Future Improvement. IX. Miscellaneous Particulars.

I. *Origin and History.*
Forbidden by Statute, 340—347; legalized in 1824, 347; remnant of ancient Guilds, Sheffield, 522, 523. Created, out of convivial meetings, Bookbinders, 98; by immediate distress, Chain Makers, 158; Sheffield, 543; Printers, 404; Tailors, 137, 299; Watch-Makers, 329; by Strikes, Bootmakers, 3; Miners, 11. History of, Bookbinders, 93—104, 633; Sheffield, 521—585, 640; Shipwrights, 478—520, 639; Printers, 77—92, 632.

II. *Objects.*
Benefit purposes, see *Benefit; Trade purposes generally*, to secure a fair day's wages for a fair day's work. Report, viii, 265; as professed, Bakers, 295; Carpenters, 135, 418; Chain Makers, 129; Cloth Lappers, 276; Coopers, 184; Cotton-Spinners, 396; Coventry Weavers, 132; Lace Makers, 130; Masons, 116, 284; Miners, 34, 41, 43, 306; Morocco Leather Finishers, 132; Painters, 137, 297; Plasterers, 122; Plumbers, 133; Potters, 135; Printers, 76, 81, 86, 87, 124, 404; Railway Spring Makers, 131; Saw-Makers, 131; Seamen, 125; Sheffield, 522; Ship-Joiners, 298; Shipwrights, 501; Shoemakers, 3; Slaters, 136; Smiths, 119; Steam-Engine Makers, 121; Tailors, 137, 277; Weavers, 128, 426, 427.

III. *Constitution.*
Purely local or organized into districts, 115, 141—146. Conditions of entrance, fees, 141—146; extra fees for strangers; Carpenters, 420; Cotton-Spinners, 402; Printers, 404; character, see *inf., Effect of Union on Character*; efficiency, *inf., Effect of Union*

upon Skill; apprenticeship, see *inf.*, *Effect of Union upon Skill*, and *Apprenticeship*; local qualification, Shipwrights, 497.—*Executive*, Bakers, 295; Bootmakers, 354; Carpenters, 367, 418; Cotton-Spinners, 393, 396; Coventry Weavers, 326; Engineers, 119; Glass Makers, 122; Iron Founders, 316; Masons, 116, 284; Miners, 29, 43, 139, 302, 304, 306; Painters, 297; Plasterers, 123; Potters, 280; Printers, 77, 78, 81, 85; Sheffield, 568, 571; Shipwrights, 480; Smiths, 121; Steam-Engine Makers, 121; Tailors, 353; Weavers, 129, and see *Balance-Sheets* and *Delegates*.—Masters may be members of Union, Sheffield, 536; Tailors, 300. More than one Union in the same trade, Bookbinders, 103; Bricklayers, 423; Carpenters, 418; Painters, 426; Shipwrights, 496. Association of different trades, National Association for the Protection of Labour, 392; Glasgow Council of United Trades, 273; Liverpool Trades Guardian Association, 297; Sheffield Association of Organized Trades, 566; Liverpool United Ship Trades Association, 298.

IV. *Rules*.
Enforcing a uniform rate of wages. See *Wages*.
Methods of Work. See *Work*.
Restrictive as to the number of Apprentices. See *Apprentices*.
The hours of Labour. See *Hours*.
The amount of Work. See *Limit*.
The term of hiring. See *Hiring*.
Control over Workmen. See *Control*.
Choice of Labourers. See *Choice*.
Choice of Foremen. See *Foremen*.
Prohibitory of work with Non-Unionists. See *Non-Unionists*.
Employment of unskilled labour. See *Unskilled*.
Employment of Women. See *Women*.
Employment of Strangers. See *Local Restrictions*.
Piecework. See *Piecework*.
Overtime. See *Overtime*.
Subcontracts. See *Contract Work*.
Truck. See *Truck*.
Deductions. See *Deductions*.
Use of Manufactured Material. See *Manufactured*.
Machinery. See *Machinery*.
Miscellaneous. See *Arbitration*, *Black Lists*, *Employment*, *Secrets*, *Strikes*. Report, xi.

V. *Necessity?*
Report, ix, x, 265, 266, 273; Discussion, 596—617; Chain Makers, 152, 153, 162; Coopers, 134, 275; Cotton-Spinners, 210, 392; Cotton Weavers, 470; Engineers, 190, 200; Lace Makers, 130; Masons, 334; Miners, 300, 301, 307; Plumbers, 133; Printers, 124; Sheffield, 538, 543, 576, 585; Shipwrights, 504; see also *Strikes* and *inf.*, *Effect of Union upon Wages*.

VI. *Effects*.
Upon Wages,
None, Chain Makers, 162; Cotton-Spinners, 389; Masons, 334; Sheffield, 576; Shipwrights, 512; Discussion, 597, 613, 614, 619, 621. *They keep wages steady*, Shipwrights, 504. *They enforce only the market rate*, Discussion, 605, 609, 610, 612, 613; and see *Strikes*. *Have raised wages unwarrantably*, Report, x; Builders, 413, 428; Cotton-Spinners, 358; Iron Founders, 318; Shipwrights, 429, 514. *As a fact, wages of United Trades are higher than wages of Non-United Trades*, Bakers, 266; Handloomers, 266; Sheffield Penknife Makers, 558; *wages of Unionists are higher than wages of Non-Unionists in the same Trade*, Chain Makers, 153; Cotton-Spinners, 389, 403; Miners, 301, 307; all Dublin Trades, 389; *secus*, Masons, 334. *Unions equalize wages irrespective of the place or the workman's skill*, see *Wages Uniformity*. *A General rise of Wages without intervention of Society, rare*, 266; Miners, 304; Sheffield, 578, *secus*, Discussion, 619, 613.
Upon Trade.
Builders, 417; Printers, 406; Sheffield, 584, 585; Shipwrights, 429, 497, 512—515; Report, xix; Discussion, 597.
Upon the Efficiency of the Workman.
272; *Qualification, a condition of entrance*, Cloth Lappers, 276; Ironmongers, 272; Masons, 284; Miners, 306; Painters, 272; Upholsterers, 272; *secus*, Miners, 304; Irish Builders, 412; Masons, 334. *Apprenticeship a condition of entrance*, Cabinet-Makers, 369; Chain Makers, 130; Coachmakers, 118; Cotton-Spinners, 397; Engineers, 119, 193; Flannel Weavers, 381; Glass Makers, 121; Masons, 116; Painters, 297; Printers, 79, 84, 404; Sheffield, 561; Shipwrights, 501, 506, 510; Steam-Engine Makers, 121. *Indemnity given to Employers*, Plasterers, 123?; Tailors, 300; Bookbinders, 123. *Bad Faith to Employers punished*, Hatters, 353. *No relief given to those dismissed for incompetence*, see *Strikes; Unsound work disapproved of*, Report, x; Builders, x; Chain Makers, 149; Potters, 283; Miners, 305; Sheffield, 559, 560; Shipwrights, 488, 497, 509; Watch-Makers, 329; and see *Piecework*, *Contract Work*. *Unionists better workmen than Non-Unionists*. Bootmakers, 321; Cotton-Spinners, 401; Irish Trades, 389; Printers, 89; Sheffield, 548; Shipwrights, 504; *Worse*, Builders, 334; Iron Founders, 318, 319; Masons, 334; Miners, 305; Discussion, 597; Sheffield, 584, 585. *Generally*, 272. Report, xiv.
Upon the moral character.
Generally, 272; Report, xviii, xix.—Character, a condition of entrance, Engineers, 119; Printers, 404; Tailors, 298. Fraud of members exposed, Printers, 90. Thieves prosecuted, Joiners, 296. Drunkenness punished, Cloth Lappers, 134. No support to those discharged for bad conduct, Masons, 285; Miners, 130; *secus*, Canal Boatmen, 430; Non-protection or punishment for breach of law, Masons, 284; Miners, 306; Shipwrights, 502; *secus*, Adwalton Miners, 139. Unionists generally of good character, Cotton-Spinners, 401; Shipwrights, 504, 515; *secus*, 272.
Upon public opinion, 272.

VII. *Present Position*.
Represent, all the Trade, Canal Boatmen, 431; Mechanics, 318; Printers, 404; Seamen, 379; Shipwrights, 429, 505, 506; Smiths, 318; Railway Spring Makers, 574. More than half the trade, Cotton-Spinners, 393, 396; Printers, 91; Sheffield, 583, &c. Half the trade, Carpenters, 367; Masons, 334; Moulders, 318; Painters, 426; Plasterers, 425. Less than half the trade, Carpenters, 418; Coopers, 374; Tailors, 299; Watch-Makers, 328.—Trades not in Union, Sheffield, 563. Unions are fairly represented by the Delegates, Report, xvi; Discussion, 599, 605, and see *Delegates*. Are increasing, Report, xvii; and improv-

ing, xviii. Cannot be put down by penal laws or lock-outs, but only expand the more, Cotton-Spinners, 392; Engineers, 187; Miners, 12; Discussion, 607. Should be recognised by Masters, Report, xvi, 187, 471. Are recognised, Builders, 419; Shipwrights, 483, 495, 498. Are not recognised, Chain Makers, 154, 158; Cotton-Spinners, 216; Cotton Weavers, 447; Engineers, 202; Printers, 409.
VIII. *Future Improvement*, Report, xix, xxi, 272; Discussion, 617.
IX. *Miscellaneous Particulars.*
Unions, the larger the better, 89, 469. Flourish most in bad times, Chain Makers, 153; Miners, 39, 300, 306. Assist each other in Strikes, Builders, 73, Chain Makers, 157; Cotton-Spinners, 260. Ought to withhold assistance to improper strikes, Bootmakers, 8. Are sometimes political, Shipwrights, 480, 492; *secus*, Sheffield, 538, 541, 543, 561. Ought never to be so. Discussion, 622.
Unskilled Labour, Prohibited by Union, Plasterers, 132; Printers, 82; Slaters, 137; Shipwrights, 515; and see *Apprenticeship*, and p. 388.
Upholsterers, Liverpool, 132.

Violence, see *Interference*.

Wages.—I. Amount. II. Method. III. Uniformity. IV. Payment.
I. *Amount of in different trades.*
Bakers, 295; Bootmakers, 354; Builders, 54, 424; Canal Boatmen, 430; Carpenters, 287, 297; Chain Makers, 155; Cloth Lappers, 276; Cloth-Workers, 359, 377; Coopers, London, 376; Glasgow, 275; Cotton-Spinners, Preston, 224, 225, 357; Glasgow, 400; Belfast, 403; Manchester, 393; Cotton Weavers, Glasgow, 356; Lancashire, 358; Glass Makers, 112; Hatters, 354; Ironmoulders, 318, 319; Masons, Glasgow, 285; in the North, 335; London, 54; Miners, 374; Painters, Glasgow, 290; Dublin, 427; Liverpool, 298; Potters, 281; Printers, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, 405; Railway Spring Makers, 575; Saddlers, 370; Sawyers, 361, 425; Sheffield Trades, 558, 572, 576; Ship-Joiners, 298; Shipwrights, 492, 493, 495, 498, 510, 512; Silk-Workers, 361; Smiths, 318; Stocking-Makers, 362, 363; Tailors, 279. *Fixed by statute directly*, 339, 340. *By Justices of the Peace*, 343, 344, 356, 363, 371, 372. *Fixed by conference between masters and men*, Cotton Weavers, 433; Masons, 285, 335; Painters, 290—293; Printers, 86, 87, 88, 405; Shipwrights, 499; Tailors, 279. *What is actually being paid often the subject of dispute*; Chain Makers, 155—158; Cotton-Spinners, Preston, 223, 225, 231; Glasgow, 358—400; Manchester, 393; Cotton Weavers, 434, 435, 441; Miners 16.
II. *Method.*
By Time, Bakers, 295; Builders, 411; By-workers in Mines, 12; Carpenters, 421; Cloth Lappers, 276; Glass Makers, 112; Ironmongers, 318; Masons, 284; Painters, 291, 297; Plasterers, 425; Ship-Joiners, 298; Shipwrights, 481; Slaters, 267; Upholsterers, 267. *By the piece*, Bootmakers, 354; Bottlemakers, 267; Chain Makers, 152; Cotton-Spinners, 389; Cotton Weavers, 433; Miners, 12; Potters, 281; Tailors, 278. *By both time and piece*, Coopers, 275; Ironfounders, 267; Miners, 12, 22, 304; Printers, 87, 88, 405; Sawyers, 361; Watch-Makers, 267; Coventry Weavers, 326.
III. *Uniformity.*
Report, xii, xix, 266, 412, 469; Discussion, 607, 616; Irrespective of varieties of skill; *Minimum* required, Builders, 412; Glass Makers, 105; Printers, 86, 87; Painters, 137; Railway Spring Makers, 575; Upholsterers, 133. *Uniformity* required; Bootmakers, 3; Building Trades, 412; Chain Makers, 130; Masons, 334; Printers, 87, 407; Seamen, 127; Sheffield Trades, 527; Shipwrights, 512, 519. Not required, Coopers, 275; Engineers, 178; Miners, 304; not enforced, Bakers, 295; Carpenters, 296; Tailors, 299; Watch-Makers, 329; Classification proposed but rejected, Carpenters, 412. Uniformity Irrespective of local disadvantages, Preston, 212; Padiham, 435; Miners, 314, 315.
IV. *Payment.*
Weekly, Miners, 24; Painters, 291; *Fortnightly*, Iron Founders, 319; Masons, 285; *Monthly*, Miners, 24, 311. Not in a public-house, see *Public*. Not in truck, see *Truck*.
Wakefield Cloth Trade, 377.
Watch-Makers of Coventry, 329.
Weavers, of Lancashire, 128; of Padiham, 433—472; of Rochdale, 381; of Yorkshire, 380; of Coventry, 132, 324—328; of Glasgow, 356.
Weight, fair method of, required by Miners, 309, 310.
Women, Employed, Bookbinders, 101; Chain Makers, 149; Cotton-Spinners, 400; Miners, 303; Sheffield Trades, 534; prohibited to work, Calico Printers, 403; Flannel Weavers, 381; Sheffield, 555; agitators, Preston, 219; opposed to strikes, Tailors, 353; themselves striking, Bookbinders, 101.
Woollen Manufacturers, 365.
Work.
Restrictions in the method of, Report, xii, Bricklayers, x; Chain Makers, 130; Glass Makers, 122; Seamen, 127, 128, 378; Shipwrights, 429, 484, 486, 499, 500, 508, 509, 515.

ERRATA.

Page 110, line 19, for "1860" read "1859."
„ 269, line 35, for "piecework" read "weekly wages."
„ 306, line 34, for "day" read "darg."
„ 315, line 34, for "8000" read "20,000."
„ 335, line 16, for "November" read "February."

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